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Arab-Israeli Talks

Sha'th: Progress Sought Before Geneva Summit

PM1301161294 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Sha'th: Washington Seeking Progress Before Clinton-al-Asad Meeting"]

[Excerpt] Cairo, AL-HAYAH—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Taba negotiations concerning the implementation of the self-rule agreement, has said that the talks concerning security issues are "proceeding slowly and facing difficulties as a result of the intransigent Israeli position on some points." He emphasized that Israel is determined to complete the withdrawal on the fixed date, that is, 13 April.

He said that discussions "are still continuing to determine the the size of the Jericho area—a difficult point requiring great efforts."

He announced that "the U.S. Administration is seeking to achieve tangible progress before before the U.S.-Syrian summit scheduled for Sunday [16 January]." He pointed to "Egyptian efforts being made to advance the negotiations, with constant follow-up of the negotiation process."

Sha'th disclosed to AL-HAYAH that the Israeli delegation presented several maps: one containing new areas added to the Jericho area, one concerning Israeli settlements, and one containing layouts for the crossings. He said that these maps "reflect an advanced position, but it does not fulfill Palestinian demands."

He said: "I believe that there is an Israeli change in terms of the security concept." He cited the statement issued by the U.S. State Department urging the Palestinian and Israeli sides to achieve progress. He said that it "is aimed at pushing the negotiations forward before the meeting between Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva on Sunday."

Sha'th pointed out that the Palestinian side may seek the intervention of the United States or Egypt "if the situation continues as it stands." [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab Affairs

Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Statement Viewed

PM1301120694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 12 Jan 94 p 15

[Khayrallah Khayrallah article: "Syria First Beneficiary"]

[Text] The importance of the statement issued at the end of the meetings of the foreign ministers of the eight signatory states of the Damascus Declaration is that it represents a preliminary step to define a comprehensive Arab policy vis-a-vis what is happening in the region. This step comes in the absence of the Arab League and in the shadow of the mutual aversions the Middle East is witnessing at more than one level.

Maybe the most important point in the statement—apart from the support it provides for President Hafiz al-Asad a few days before the awaited meeting between him and President Clinton—is that it avoids thorny issues which can be discussed at a later stage, like the Arab boycott of Israel. In this connection it seems striking that the eight states sought to come out with a position that is far removed from rhetorical oneupmanship and as close as possible to realism. In return for the statement's support for Syria, Damascus had to continue its "neutral" position on the Gaza-Jericho First agreement. Although describing the agreement as "a first step which should be complemented by steps on the other tracks" is a statement which needs to be explained and could have more than one meaning, Syria's agreement to it again means that a minimum of understanding has been reached between it and Egypt, which is sparing no efforts to make the Palestinian-Israeli agreement a success.

It is clear that Syria was the first beneficiary of the meetings of the foreign ministers of the eight states in Damascus. What seems to be useful in this connection is that the statement issued by the eight ministers, which supports the United Arab Emirates' position toward Iran in their dispute over the three islands [Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa], has shown that the Damascus Declaration has not died and that what has actually died is a certain understanding of the declaration—the understanding whereby it is made to shoulder more than it can bear. Once the signatories are convinced of this, it will be easy to hold meetings, adopt positions, and seek an understanding on the broad outlines of Arab policies.

The statement can in itself represent a serious attempt to determine what can and what cannot be done. With the passage of time it has become clear that words have become meaningful even in the Arab world. And that it is no longer acceptable to talk about the region in the manner that existed in the past. And that every single word means something now, especially when it comes to Gulf security and the role of every party in safeguarding it. This is because all the developments that have taken place since the second Gulf war, which was the result of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, fall within one framework, namely redefining the roles in the region, taking into account the role played by the international coalition in defeating Iraq, in addition to the role of the states surrounding Iraq and the Arab world. If this process of redefining the roles had not taken place, the Madrid conference would not have been convened or led to what it has led to.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat: Talks Deadlocked Due to Israeli Stand

LD1301191894 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] The brother President leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] said that the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations have reached a deadlock because of Israelis' avoiding the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement which they signed in Washington and their attempts to explain the agreement in a wrong way which only serves their aim. He warned that the failure of this agreement would lead to a comprehensive chaos in the region.

In an interview to the Qatari paper AL SHARQ, which it published on Thursday [13 January], the brother President leader Abu-'Ammar stressed that the Palestinians would not be the losers at the end because instability would affect all the region.

The brother President leader Abu-'Ammar added that while the Palestinians demanded a full Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho region, the Israelis wanted to carry out an operation of redeployment of their army which is a matter violating the agreement signed between the two sides.

The brother President leader Abu-'Ammar added that Israel wanted to control crossings in order to make the Palestinians live in isolated areas, which is a matter rejected by the Palestinian side in the negotiations.

The brother president leader criticized the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and said that he was not interested in anything anymore now that he has received the U.S. reward for signing the Washington agreement including weapons, a giant computer which can only be found in super-powers in addition to 240 million dollars to spend on redeployment of Israeli forces in addition to other U.S. loan guarantees.

Al-Najjab: Israel 'Using' Talks To Annex Land

PM1101115494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Jan 94 p6

[Report by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi: "Sulayman al-Najjab Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Israel Is Planning To Bring Autonomy Rule Under Its Control and To Isolate Jerusalem Permanently From the Palestinian State"]

[Excerpts] Tunis—A PLO official has emphasized that Israel's current intransigence and backtracking intensify the negotiation impasse and more clearly expose the Israeli Government's intention of using the negotiations as a cover for annexation and expropriation of land not carried out before the peace negotiations. The evidence, he said, can be found in Israel's continuing implementation of measures isolating Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied territories and its rejection of any demands for the reversal of these measures.

The Israelis, he said, are still using the Palestinian detainees and deportees as hostages to blackmail the Palestinian side. The official, PLO Executive Committee Member Sulayman al-Najjab, who was talking to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, said that, during the recent negotiations, the Israelis hinted that they were willing to release a new batch of detainees if the Palestinians accepted the recent Israeli proposals on supervision and control of the crossing points and bridges.

On the results of the latest round of negotiations held by the liaison mission recently in Cairo, al-Najjab said: "That round did not achieve any tangible progress because the Israeli side retreated from its previous positions adopted in Paris and Tunis." [passage omitted]

The Israeli Government, al-Najjab said, is now acting without regard or consideration for the Declaration of Principles and behaving as if that agreement did not exist.

Al-Najjab stressed that the security issue, which the Israeli side uses as a pretext, insisting on the article in the agreement which gives it responsibility for external security, does not concern Israel alone, because it is a matter of mutual concern.

He said that the Israeli side overlooks a fact which is linked to and not less important than the security issue, namely the stipulations in the Declaration of Principles agreement regarding the Palestinian right to control the parts of their homeland from which the Israeli Army withdraws and which, in the first stage, are the Gaza Strip and Jericho area. [passage omitted]

Al-Najjab added: We cannot forfeit this acquired right because that would not only make the withdrawal meaningless but would also clearly set a ceiling for the entity which we aim to set up, making it just autonomy under full Israeli control with no prospect of development towards independence. [passage omitted]

Al-Najjab called on the Arab and international parties concerned with the peace process and its success to take the necessary steps to make the Israelis change their position and respect the provisions of the Declaration of Principles agreement and its implementation dates. He affirmed that, in maintaining its intransigent position, Israel tries to exploit the poor coordination among the Arab parties participating in the peace process. [passage omitted]

Al-Najjab urged the U.S. Administration to take firmer stands against Israeli policies and to take a more comprehensive view of the nature of the obstacles preventing progress in the negotiations instead of maintaining the current U.S. position which fully adopts the Israeli viewpoint.

In conclusion, al-Najjab stressed that the Israeli position threatening to torpedo the negotiations should be a new incentive for the Palestinians to close their national ranks, eliminate all the loopholes that have emerged, and open the way for national dialogue on two fronts, the first being the front of the forces which support the agreement, and the aim here should be to enhance the Palestinian leadership's performance, develop the PLO's methods of work, and increase participation of representatives of all Palestinian groups and forces inside and outside the occupied territory in the current political process and in the process of national reconstruction.

The second front, he said, is that of the Palestinian patriotic forces opposed to the agreement with whom dialogue should continue because the disagreement between the two fronts is about the means and not the aims. [passage omitted]

'Nine Points' Will Not Solve Political Crisis

PM1201122694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Jan 94 p9

[Article by Bilal al-Hasan: "The Nine Points Are Not the Solution"]

[Text] If we examine the nine points conveyed by a Palestinian delegation headed by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi to Yasir 'Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee, we would

conclude quite simply that even if Yasir 'Arafat fully accepted all nine points, this would not resolve the PLO's crisis. The crisis would continue and get worse.

The nine points call for the formation of committees, leadership bodies, development councils, and planning and consultation bodies. They contain no political substance, but the problem is basically one of political substance.

It was the absence of an agreed political concept that prompted the call for reform, the drafting of a memorandum urging reform, and the dispatch of a delegation headed by 'Abd-al-Shafi to discuss the issue of reform.

For instance, the Taba negotiations are going through a crisis at present. The negotiations are led on the Palestinian side by Dr. Nabil Sha'th. If a committee was formed to participate in the negotiations with him, would that make a difference to the negotiation outcome and would it mean a certain change for the better? Of course not, because the presence of a committee with Sha'th would not make him more eloquent in expressing the Palestinian position and would have no effect on the nerves and morale of the Israeli negotiators.

It is a question of Palestinian "policy." Palestinian policy is the point of contention. That is what should be discussed with 'Arafat. After that and once agreement is reached on that, it would be easy to form committees and we might discover that there was no longer a need for such committees.

We have, over a period of some months, witnessed conflicting Palestinian policies. There was the policy pursued for 11 rounds in the Washington bilateral negotiations and then there was the policy which emerged in the Oslo secret talks and torpedoed all foundations of the negotiations held in Washington and the efforts to impose the idea of Palestinian sovereignty there, and then there was the third policy pursued in the Taba and Cairo negotiations raising the question of sovereignty again through insistence on the issue of the crossings and their control.

Now, with the unconditional—as they say—resumption of the Taba negotiations we are seing a fourth aspect of Palestinian policy. That could mean dropping the formal demands on sovereignty and accepting just symbolic verbal or practical hints.

These conflicting Palestinian policies denote a lack of strategy, absence of vision, absence of constant principles, and absence of red lines. They also reflect a Palestinian crisis. It is a political crisis. A political dialogue is needed for resolving that crisis but many people feel that it is now too late for that because the decisionmakers had already made up their minds and signed the Oslo agreement, and that it is now up to them to pluck out their own thorns with their own hands.

The Palestinian crisis is no longer a crisis between hardliners and moderates or between romantics and realists or between accepters and rejecters and therefore it is not a matter for committees or committee debates to solve. The crisis is now between those who believe in a Palestinian pan-Arab position and those advocating cooperation with Israel's genius or who dream of Palestinian regional concept. It is now a battle between continuation of the fedayeen factions hegemony over Palestinian political action or new hegemony of the social forces over political action. These matters are the crux of the crisis and that is what should be discussed regardless of whether or not the nine requested committees are formed.

PLO Economic Body Meets, Adopts Decisions

JN1401103794 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] The Board of Governors of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction [PECDR] met in Tunis 9-11 January 1994. Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, PLO Executive Committee chairman, and head of the Palestinian National Authority, attended the meeting.

The PECDR Board of Governors adopted the following decisions:

At its third regular session on 9, 10, 11 January the PECDR Board of Governors decided the following:

The Board of Governors has discussed the statutes of the PECDR. After making some amendments, the board recommends referring them to the PLO Executive Committee for study and for the issuance of the relevant decree.

At its third regular session on 9, 10, 11 January, the PECDR Board of Governors decided the following:

1. After listening to the report submitted by the committee tasked with studying the applications for filling the vacancies in the departments and sections, and in view of the fact that interviews with candidates have not been completed, and to give more qualified Palestinian candidates the chance to submit their applications to fill these vacancies, the following has been decided:

1. [as heard] To extend the period during which applications can be received for filling the vacancies that have been announced until 25 January 1994.

The under-mentioned brothers, upon the recommendation of the director general on 10 December 1993, will be tasked with the temporary supervision of the board's main departments. [5 second break in reception]

—Brother Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Hamad, to supervise the department of projects.
—Brother Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, to supervise the economic policies department.
—Brother Sami al-Tarazi, to supervise the technical assistance department.
—Brother Dr. Amin Haddad, to supervise the coordination of aid.
—Brother Muhammad Shtayah, to supervise administrative, financial, and backup services affairs.
—Brother Samir Hulaylah, to supervise the department charged with coordinating and facilitating the work of specialized organizations and agencies.
—Brother Dr. Samih al-'Abid, as adviser to the group.

—Brother Hasan Abu-Libdah, second deputy director general will head the supervisors team.

A PECDR bureau will be immediately established in the Gaza Strip near the main headquarters and the brother director general, the delegated member, will be tasked with carrying this out after consultation with the members of the Board of Governors who are present in Palestine.

The above-mentioned brothers shall be seconded from their organizations and will be compensated for their salaries throughout their secondment period until action is taken on the applications on condition they fully devote their time to this task during the temporary period.

Each of the mentioned brothers will, in the field specified for him, carry out the duties of supervisor of the department, nominate those who are qualified to work in its various sections, and start exercising the duties of the department throughout the temporary period and until directors are seconded or appointed.

The brother members of the Board of Governors residing in Palestine will provide the final authority in the field for these departments and the staff nominated to work in their various sections, as well as for the works assigned to them, including tenders, contracts, and so forth. Work will be run in full coordination with them. The brother members are:

—Brother Ibrahim al-Daqqaq, coordinator for the PECDR members residing in Palestine

—Brother Dr. Sari Nusaybah, deputy director general

—Brother Hasan Abu-Libdah, deputy director general

—Brothers Dr. Nabil Qassis, Dr. Sufyan Sultan, Dr. Muhammad al-Samhuri, and Mustafa Murtaja

An approximately $1.5 billion provisional budget will be allocated for the work of these departments. Funds will be dispensed from the budget in accordance with the established accounting procedures to cover the expenses of these departments. The director general is authorized to contact the donor international parties to secure the necessary budget for the offices of the Board of Governors in Palestine and Tunis.

The Board of Governors will during its next meeting make a final decision naming the heads of departments. The posts of directors will remain vacant until the next meeting, taking into account what is stipulated in Article 2-1 [as heard, no article 2-1 anywhere in the item] below.

The committee charged with choosing the nominated persons will continue its work to search for qualified persons to fill the posts of heads of the five departments.

The director general will contact the brothers charged with supervising the departments and specify their provisional tasks and allocate the budgets needed for their work.

The seconded brothers can be permanently appointed in their current posts or nominated for other posts in line with the civil service structure and in accordance with the regulations, guidelines, and criteria specified by the Board of Governors.

Dr. Antoine Dahlan is charged with completing the guidelines and regulations to build the PECDR in coordination with the director general and the supervisors of departments and the donor international parties. He will then present them to the Board of Governors, which will in turn issue them in their final form. It must be stressed that the basic tasks of departments must be completed before the next meeting. The budget necessary for this task will be allocated in coordination with Dr. Dahlan, and as necessary.

The coordinator, in cooperation with other PECDR members, is charged with executing the Board of Governors' earlier decision to lease a headquarters for the PECDR in Jerusalem and provide the necessary furniture and equipment.

Brother Hasan Abu-Libdah is appointed second deputy director general. He is to work full time for that mission. He is also appointed permanent member of the Board of Governors by virtue of his post. He will remain director of the Palestinian Statistics Center in Palestine. Meanwhile, a brother will be charged with running the center under his supervision.

The director general will present a report to the next Board of Governors meeting detailing progress made in implementing the board's decisions.

Frayj Notes 'Mistrust' Among Palestinians

NC1401093794 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj in Bethlehem by Fayiz al-Minufi in Cairo within the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Al-Minufi] Good morning, Mr. Ilyas.

[Frayj] Good morning and welcome.

[Al-Minufi] With the peace talks now under way between the Palestinians and the Israelis in Taba, we are surprised by the Israeli Government's decision to build a new settlement on Mount Olive. In your view, what are the reasons for this action?

[Frayj] I denounce the confiscation of Arab land and the construction of settlements during negotiations and following the signing of the agreement and the mutual declaration [between Israel and the PLO]. This is not a sign of goodwill and casts doubts on Israel's desire for peace. I believe that this action has more arrogance than benefits for Israel. Mount Olive is densely populated and every inch of it is owned by Arabs, including the monasteries that have been in existence on this holy mountain for 2,000 years.

[Al-Minufi] The negotiations being held in Taba between the Palestinians and Israelis have achieved positive results within the civilian committee, but there is still stagnation within the security committee. What is the reaction in the Palestinian street to these talks?

[Frayj] There is mistrust among the Palestinians. This mistrust is deepening day by day. The Israeli measures in the occupied territories are worsening. They are not easing the tension, they are not allowing family reunions or freeing

Palestinian prisoners, etc. The mistrust is deepening and could have a negative impact on the peace process.

[Al-Minufi] April is the deadline for implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, but so far the two sides have not settled the differences impeding the implementation of the agreement. What effect this could have on the Palestinians?

[Frayj] According to the information we receive from the talks in Taba, there is tangible progress on the transfer of powers, but some (?difficult) obstacles remain regarding the security issues. Judging by the information we received from the Palestinian delegations, I believe that the Israeli troops will begin withdrawing from Gaza and Jericho before 13 April. [passage omitted]

Hamas Leader on Opposition to Self-Rule Elections

TA1201144494 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 11 Jan 94 pp 1, 19

[By Salim Tayah]

[Text] Tulkarm, QUDS PRESS—A Palestinian leader has said that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] supports "the launching of a comprehensive national dialogue."

Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, a leader of the Hamas deportees in south Lebanon, added that such a dialogue "will constitute a means for the Palestinian people, inside and outside, to avoid the calamities of the coming period, the self-rule period."

Al-Zahhar doubted the seriousness of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's invitation to conduct such a dialogue, and said: I hope that the intention is not merely to hold a meeting." He urged the Palestinian factions "not to participate in this dialogue unless its objective is explained to them in advance." He called on the Palestinian leadership to formulate "a political program vis-a-vis the program of the opposition factions for retrieving full Palestinian rights."

Al-Zahhar added that "many previous meetings with 'Arafat were just maneuvers in advance of participation in the ninth round of talks, which led to circumventing the issue of the deportees."

A series of meetings between PLO leaders, headed by Yasir 'Arafat, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad failed to adopt a unified stance on the peace talks and the deportees' issue.

Al-Zahhar vehemently denied reports that Hamas intends to participate in the self-rule elections. He said: We will neither take part in self-rule elections nor in self-rule institutions. He added: However, in the past we participated and will participate in every professional and popular elections that serve the Palestinian public, without any relation to the self-rule authority.

Malluh: PFLP Position Not Influenced by Syria

JN1301125894 Amman AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p 10

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Political Bureau, who resigned his post as a PLO Executive Committee member to protest the Gaza-Jericho agreement, by Usamah al-Rantisi; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Al-Rantisi] As the opposition, what will be your position if the Syrians sign an agreement with the Israelis?

[Malluh] We have from the very beginning, since the Madrid conference, opposed the proposed settlement. We opposed it while Syria was involved in it. Therefore, our opposition was not directed against the Palestinian party alone, and it did not start with the signing of the Oslo agreement. Of course, as a Palestinian faction, our role and action should concentrate on the Palestinian arena. At the same time, we believe that the current negotiations will yield certain results between Syria and Israel and between Jordan and Israel.

We in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine believe it is unfair to view us from the perspective of our presence in Syria. The front is not hostage to this or that place. We are present where the Palestinian people are. I would not be revealing a secret when I say that our organizational presence in Syria is the weakest link of our presence as far as we are concerned. This is due to the size of the Palestinian presence in Syria. So our opposition is not linked to this or that Arab party. True, we may face some difficulties if the Syrian-Israeli negotiations achieve results in the near future, but this will not change our position on the settlement and its threats to the [Palestinian] cause. When we believe in a political stand, we will not allow the geography factor to influence us. You remember our position in the unity experience of 1987, the war of the camps, and other events.

We are interested in finding positions for ourselves. It is our right to do so in order to move freely and say what we believe in. Our search for contradictions in the settlement equation in order to benefit from it is one thing, but our position on the Oslo agreement and its liquidationst results is another. [passage omitted]

Algeria

FLN Meets To Discuss Conference Participation

LD1301144394 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Excerpt] With the start of the countdown to the date of the national conference, political parties are moving toward making firm decisions on their participation in the conference. It is expected that the position of some parties regarding this matter will become clear today and tomorrow. Mennam reports:

[Mennam] The National Liberation Front [FLN] has been holding an emergency meeting in Hotel Aurassi since this morning. The meeting is due to last for two days. The meeting was preceded by a session of the political bureau to decide on the meeting's agenda, which will focus on studying the general situation in the country and the progress of the national dialogue. In this context, the meeting is expected to make a decision on the FLN's participation in the national conference which is due to be held on 25-26 January. A further report on this morning's session from the radio team in Hotel Aurassi:

[Correspondent] The FLN's Central Committee emergency meeting is being held this time amid circumstances characterized by the gravity of the prevailing situation in the country at all levels. In this context, FLN Secretary General Abdelhamid Mehri dealt with the situation in his opening speech in which he talked about his party's stance vis-a-vis the process of the dialogue and the developments in the country since the resignation of former President Bendjedid and the appointment of what was described by Mehri as an effective authority to run the transitional phase.

Mehri's statement included a critical view of the way the dialogue has been handled and the way the Higher State Council [HCE] has been running the country's affairs. In the opinion of the FLN's leading official, the results reached have been negative in all spheres. The HCE assumed the role of leading the corrective [tashihiyah] movement and did not confine itself to the limits of the presidential post, according to Mehri. It sought to create better political parties, a better constitution and, in a sense, to shape the political map that has been created by the society. The result was that in place of what has been removed there is a vacuum, and this has not been replaced by anything better—so much so that the authority is about to lose channels of communication, leaving the opportunity for the emergence of a lack of clarity in all the stances taken with a view to resolving the crisis, in Mehri's opinion.

Generally, Mehri repeated to the FLN Central Committee his previous statements regarding the absence of a debate on central issues, such as ways of stopping the chain of violence. As far as he is concerned the dialogue has focused on ways of dividing up posts as a means of raising the issue of how to extend the transitional phase. The logic applied by the FLN's leadership to the process of the dialogue made the secretary general regard the dialogue meetings as a series of meetings which were far away from public debates among the various sides.

Mehri's perception moves toward a rejection of what he termed as bearing responsibility for disinforming public opinion and officials. He added that his party cannot say that the dialogue has succeeded while thousands of families are experiencing helplessness and hunger, and, furthermore, the people have become afraid of the state.

We have noted the absence of former Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche and the participation of other traditional members of the FLN in the meeting.

Regarding participating in or boycotting the national conference, the dominant view among members is that there is a possibility that the Central Committee will recommend the political bureau to make the FLN's final decision. [passage omitted]

Dembri Holds Talks With Portuguese Counterpart

LD1401011094 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] After a visit to the Spanish capital, Madrid, Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri is in the Portuguese capital, Lisbon, today.

Mr. Dembri spoke of the situation in Algeria, the scope of the national dialogue conference and other issues. A report from Lisbon by our television correspondent Samia Azi:

[Azi] Today was the first meeting between Foreign Minister Mr. Dembri after arriving in Lisbon airport with his counterpart, Mr. Durao Barroso, at the Portuguese Foreign Ministry. The tete-a-tete talks, which lasted more than 30 minutes, consisted of different topics: security in Algeria, the national dialogue conference, and Algerian economic reform policy.

International problems were not ruled out at the two ministers' talks. What is happening in Bosnia-Herzegovina, expectations for Middle East talks, and North-South relations were discussed.

The meeting later expanded to include delegations from both sides.

[Begin Portuguese Foreign Minister Durao Barroso recording in French] I can frankly tell you that here, in Europe, we are very worried about the news we get from Algeria regarding security matters. My Algerian colleague has had the opportunity to tell me that some of these reports are exaggerated, that the situation is under control, but, frankly, we have great respect for Algeria and the Algerian people. We think of Algeria as a very welcoming country and it would be a shame to see this image now change abroad. [end recording]

In the evening, the Algerian foreign minister, Mr. Mohamed Salah Dembri, met Portuguese President Mario Alberto Soares.

Mr. Dembri told the president that Algeria always supported Portugal in its chosen democratic path.

After he met the Portuguese president, we asked Mr. Dembri:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] As you end your meeting with the Portuguese president, what is your opinion of the Portuguese position towards what is happening in Algeria—that is of course after your meeting with the president?

[Dembri] After Spain, our visit to Portugal appeared to be very useful because we did not have continuous dialogue with Portugal since 1987. But now, we agreed this morning with the foreign minister to strengthen bilateral ties and to raise them to the required level.

Political dialogue with the Portuguese authorities consisted of all what interests our countries bilaterally as well as multilaterally, while including the Mediterranean, the Maghreban Union and what interests us in terms of current international developments.

The Portuguese were very optimistic about the current developments in Algeria concerning the national dialogue conference and scopes for future proposals. Algeria still occupies its natural position and has preserved its reputation, well-known in the histories of countries which have reached independence after liberation wars. [as heard] [end recording] [passage omitted]

Economy Minister Benachenhou Interviewed

LD1301000194 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1103 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Interview with Minister of Economy Mourad Benachenhou by unidentified correspondent, in Algiers on 12 January—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] We have with us here Mourad Benachenhou, the minister of economy. Welcome, Mr. Minister, to Radio Algiers. To begin with, we would like you to talk to us about the economic and financial situation of Algeria.

The first question is about the policies of the treasury. Algeria's budget deficit in 1993 was estimated at 190 billion dinars; this year's budget deficit is estimated at 125.3 billion dinars. This question is how is this deficit going to be met, and what are the repercussions of it on the inflationary pressures which are quite high anyhow.

[Benachenhou] One should start by saying in the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, before anything else. I would like to thank the radio for giving me this opportunity to explain a number of matters of interest relating to the citizens' daily life, including economic and financial problems. Your question was a direct and clear one and I can answer in two parts. I will be talking in the first part about the state expenses and in the second part about the revenues to finance such expenses. [passage omitted]

In order to find new revenue we have carried out a study of the economy and found new resources which have never been used before. We have included them in this year's budget. Thanks to these measures we have managed to reduce the budget deficit for this year. Nevertheless, we cannot say that we are fully happy with such a reduction; we would have liked to cut the deficit even further because the more we cut the budget deficit the better we can control inflation. However, we cannot go back overnight on our economic and social commitments.

[Correspondent] The 1994 budget was drawn up on the basis of an oil price of $18 per barrel. Some say that this price is very optimistic, in view of the current situation of the oil market and the expected development. If this price is not achieved in the market, what measures does the government intend taking to face this, because this will lead to a reduction in oil revenue, and ultimately perhaps increase the deficit?

[Benachenhou] At any rate the government has these expectations on the basis of studies carried out by two international organizations, the IMF and the World Bank. The studies of these two organizations are taken into consideration by all the states which export raw materials, that is, industrial and advanced states or developing states such as Algeria. We based the $18 price on official reports prepared by professional people working in the World Bank and the IMF. There is in fact a reduction in oil prices; there is a fluctuation. We do not know whether the price will go up or down. We had to make a decision in order to prepare the budget of this year and this decision—as I have said—was based on international studies which are internationally guaranteed for their feasibility. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] This year's budget includes for the first time a clause on bankruptcy and legal settlement with regard to public enterprises; is this clause an indication of an effort to overcome the problems of the loss of the public sector and public enterprises?

[Benachenhou] We can say two things regarding the role of the public sector in the economy. First, the public sector's share of this country's production is 65 percent. Second, the public sector, including the administrative and industrial sectors, employs about one third of the work force in the country. When we start talking about the reorganization of the public sector we are talking about the reorganization of almost the whole of the Algerian economy, and even the reorganization of Algerian administrative departments. There is no economic scope for a country in which there is no direct or indirect intervention. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Still with the budget law. This year's budget has envisaged reduction of some taxes, i.e. the tax on companies profits, and the reorganization of the income tax as well as a reduction in VAT [value added tax] and the abolition of compensatory tax. Also this year's budget envisages for the first time the provision of extra revenue, about 50 billion dinars, through combating tax evasion. Will the tax authorities have the material and human resources to be able to face up to tax evasion? Also, aren't you afraid that tax reduction will lead to less revenue for the state?

[Benachenhou] I would like to stress here that this government is determined to fight tax evasion; tax is a duty and a right. [passage omitted]

As far as your second question is concerned I can tell you that there is no direct link between tax revenues and the level of tax imposed on economic activity, which is subject to taxation. In many instances it is better, in order to

increase tax revenues, to reduce the percentage of the tax. And this is what we have done. There are instances when the high level of taxation would convince people that it is worthwhile to try to hide their earnings all together from the tax people in order to pay no tax at all. Hence, although we have reduced taxes, we are convinced that such a reduction will increase tax revenues because people will be more inclined to pay them.

[Corresponden] [passage omitted] What is the way, in the opinion of the government or the Ministry of Economy, for reviving the national economy?

[Benachenhou] Since its formation, the government has taken several measures to raise the confidence of the private sector. This is because, with regard to the public sector, there is a direct and continuous intervention by the state so that the level of production capability will not be lowered further than the current level. The government's idea is that the private sector has capabilities, that is to say, bigger participation in the revival of the economy.

Therefore, the government enacted the law on investment which provided tax and financial concessions, so that people in the private sector who have the entrepreneurial spirit and have ideas on investment will be encouraged and take the necessary measures to begin investment. This is the first thing. The other thing is that one knows that banks play a major role in the economy. The government therefore has taken several measures to improve the working and management conditions of banks so that they will participate in a more effective way in financing the economy and particularly in financing investments. The government has been working for five months only, during which it took legal measures, as I outlined earlier, which concern the financial sector and measures within the framework of the financial law. All these measures require time before they begin to have noticeable results in the market. What have we noticed? Generally speaking, we noticed that some kind of revival has taken place. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] On 15 January, an important date, talks resume with the IMF. For the first time since the start of the debt crisis in 1982, Algeria is officially announcing that it is unable to pay its debt service on time and guarantee a minimum level of imports to meet its food needs while continuing its other matters. What are the proposed solutions to surmount this problem, especially as we notice that several expressions and concepts are being used: some people are talking about rescheduling, others are mentioning a multilateral restructuring, and others are suggesting the cancellation of part of the debt?

[Benachenhou] The question you have just asked is extremely complex, and I have no immediate answer for it because we are still talking to the IMF and intend to be very thorough at these talks. We will have to discuss almost every sentence included in the reports presented by us and by the IMF. We must also discuss the figures which will define the country's internal financial situation and the figures which will give an idea on the external financial situation. When we have drawn some kind of a joint conclusion, which can only be drawn after we have resumed our talks with the IMF in the second half of January, we will then decide what the most effective way will be to reduce the external debt, because the most important thing is to alleviate the burden of the debt service, irrespective of the expressions used. This is as far as our relations with the IMF are concerned.

Moreover, there are states and international banks and financial institutions which have granted us loans. We must also hold talks with these sides in order to reach a formula which will take into account Algeria's interests and our interests [as heard]. We must now stress that the government's objective is to reach a formula which will enable us to alleviate the burden of our external debt.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, you have touched on the relations or the talks with the IMF and you have said that these talks are both complex and thorough. On the other hand, we know that the IMF, as a financial institution which has experience in negotiating with countries, has almost a model prescription which is well known; namely, a devaluation of the dinar, a reduction in state intervention, and redundancies. On the basis of these facts and this prescription, what room for maneuver does the government and Algeria have in light of lower revenues and the collapse of oil prices?

[Benachenhou] I have talked about negotiations and I have not talked about obeying orders from an institution. In any case, Algeria is an independent country and a member of the IMF. Within the framework of its participation in the IMF, it has duties and it also has rights. These duties and rights exist in the context of an international agreement. There is no international institution which can force Algeria to take measures that are not in its interests or that transcend the international relations and legal foundations which exist between our country and the IMF. I should have stressed this at the onset. This means that Algeria has total freedom for maneuver, regardless of the financial and economic difficulties which it is experiencing. In the end, it is for Algeria to decide whether it is economically, financially, socially, and politically able to absorb the IMF's proposals and recommendations or whether these proposals are acceptable. Algeria is totally independent of the IMF regardless of its financial circumstances.

You talked about a unified model. I would like to say that this model is not a model that can be exported directly from one country to another. Every country has its own peculiarities regarding its economic and financial structure. Any measure that will be taken or that is agreed upon in the framework of an IMF program must take into account the country's social, financial, and economic peculiarities and also the country's own economic and financial structure. If we had found ourselves in the clear situation which you talked about and in which there would be a unified formula that is applied to all the countries, then there would be no need for talks and we would ask the IMF to send us the list of its measures and we would start implementing them. Then we would ask the IMF: Please send us the money. This is clear. Negotiations are taking place in the real sense of the word.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, you spoke about negotiations with the IMF and stressed that they were negotiations

and not a model prescription. But no doubt the issue of the national currency will be raised with the IMF. We note in the market@that there is a wide gap between the official rate, which is about 4.5 dinars to the franc, and the black market where the rate sometimes reaches 13 dinars to the franc. How will the problem of the dinar be settled with the IMF, bearing in mind that there are people who are saying that the dinar should be devalued by 50 percent, and others who say that the devaluation should be gradual, 1 percent per month? How will the problem be settled?

[Benachenhou] Regarding this problem, it is linked to several factors; there is no direct solution, nor a direct decision with regard to the value of the currency because this rate is linked to other things, including issues which we spoke about earlier, such as the financial deficit and how to finance the deficit. The problem is not that of a financial deficit, but of financing it by existing revenues. In other words, the financial deficit has no influence over the value of the currency. I do not want to conceal from you that when we speak to the IMF we cover all issues relating to the economy and finance, including the budget, foreign trade, the value of the currency, and so on. But the value of the currency is the result of the influence of several factors which are linked to the method of issuing the currency to finance the economy and to the way in which the economy functions and its effectiveness, meaning the production capability available in the economy. People have noticed a kind of fall of the dinar in the black market. I wish to stress two things with regard to the black market: one, what is the value of the deals which are being made within this black market? I do not know. Are these deals marginal in comparison with the volume of all the deals which are made within the economy? Has the parallel market got a bigger role than one can imagine? No one can provide you with an analysis of this. We know and cannot deny that there is a black market, and that the value of the dinar in the black market is less than the official value of the dinar. But there is no direct connection between this black market value and the real value of the dinar. If we tomorrow totally free the value of the dinar; if, for example, tomorrow the Central Bank decides to totally cease fixing the value of the dinar, will this value fall to the level of the black market value or not? No one can tell you. Besides there are no capabilities to estimate or calculate this. What concerns us at this time is to know that the government within the framework of negotiations with the IMF does not accept suggestions which cannot be economically, financially, and socially absorbed, no matter what these suggestions may be, and even suggestions relating to the value of the dinar.

[Correspondent] We must not forget that there is a psychological facet concerning the dinar which is greater. Maybe the situation would change if the Central Bank declared its revenue.

[Benachenhou] This is true. There is a psychological facet. We can say that there is a flaw in the method of financing revenues in this country. There are matters [word indistinct] linked to trade which could influence the value of the dinar in the black market. Consequently, we must not take that value as a gauge. We must set the real value of the dinar within the framework of the market where there is supply and demand for the dinar and for hard currency.

[Correspondent] The other issue which is always raised with that of the IMF is the issue concerning public sector enterprises. In this year's budget, nearly 80 billion dinars have been earmarked for the financial reform of these enterprises and their restructuring. This restructuring requires a mass reduction in the workforce. Has any final decision been taken by the government and the Economy Ministry and what are the expected effects on the unemployment rate, which is already high at nearly 25 percent?

[Benachenhou] Indeed, 76 billion dinars have been earmarked in this year's budget for the reorganization of the public sector enterprises. This huge amount of money highlights the state's commitment to take all the necessary measures to revitalize this sector and maintain the economic and social role it is playing at the moment. Moreover, the problems concerning the restructuring of the public sector are very marginal for the IMF institution gives us some recommendations on ways to come out of the crisis. It is our duty as a state to take all the necessary measures to enable this sector to contribute more to the revival of the economy. This contribution is linked to the difficult conditions which the Algerian economy is going through and also to the way these enterprises are managed internally. What are we going to do? We are going to adapt these conditions imposed on the public and private enterprises alike. However, these public enterprises must, as independent enterprises, also take numerous measures to improve their management and reduce the costs which are not directly linked to their production capacity. In any case, we cannot say that these enterprises are waiting for the IMF recommendations to take these measures; several measures have been taken with the collaboration of the social partners. I must once again stress that the restructuring and reform of the economy will not be done at the expense of a given social category. This must be clearly understood.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, still on the same subject. When we compare figures of the study for 1992, we find that the amount earmarked for financial reforms was 160 billion dinars, in 1993 it was 83 billion, and this year it is estimated at 76 billion. Every year, since 1990, we have been saying that the reorganization of public enterprises would be completed that year. Yet, every time the same problem is raised in the same way. For example, workers' wages are not being paid by many enterprises. Is it possible for the state to continue financing them in this way?

[Benachenhou] The state has decided on new bodies for the running of public enterprises. I am talking about the 1989 laws. Their aim was to raise the level of economic and financial responsibility of those enterprises. Within this framework, the state set in motion a number of financial measures in order to restore some financial balance and organization in those enterprises to enable them to become independent.

The state has played its role to make those enterprises have an independence built on clear and rational bases. However, for many reasons, some of which are internal to the public

enterprise and others connected to the difficult financial and economic conditions experienced by Algeria, those enterprises were not able to reach the required financial balance. Therefore, the state continued to contribute to the financing or refinancing of those enterprises from the funds allocated in the budget for financial assistance.

As a government, we are hoping that the time will come when the enterprises will be able to contribute more toward the state budget than allocated to the running of the enterprises. However, circumstances make it necessary for us to support public enterprises for economic reasons because they have a great production capability, and for social reasons too. Those enterprises employ a large number of people and the rate of unemployment would rise if those people were not employed.

[Correspondent] Negotiations started recently with the General Union of Algerian Workers. Some are saying or proposing that, since prices are rising rapidly and that there is shortage of numerous basic commodities, wages should be index-linked and raised. What does the Economy Ministry think about this proposal? Will this lead, for example, to an inflationary spiral?

[Benachenhou] Negotiations are currently under way with the trade union, the General Union of Algerian Workers, which has an important and essential role to play in providing social protection for the workers. The government is listening seriously to all the analyses which are made by this trade union and which are linked to its role and mission. Several in-depth, frank, and lengthy discussions have taken place with this trade union. These discussions will continue until we reach a formula which will take into account the country's economic and financial conditions, because we cannot take any measure which could have a negative impact on the economic balances and which could lead to a rise in the inflation rate. Any rise in the inflation rate would make the social situation of the workers worse. All I can say is that we are talking to the trade union with an open mind, but we are talking under complex and very difficult circumstances.

[Correspondent] The minister delegate of commerce has announced that Algeria has expressed its intention to join GATT, the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade. What are the reasons behind this request, and, if Algeria was to be allowed to join GATT, what would the expected effects be on the national economy, since we know that Algeria exports only hydrocarbons at the moment?

[Benachenhou] In any case, several international organizations are in charge of financial, economic, and commercial affairs worldwide. Algeria is probably one of the very few countries which did not participate in GATT, despite the fact that the latter comes under the same general agreements governing the creation of the IMF and the World Bank. Therefore it was necessary for Algeria to complete its membership in these economic institutions and join GATT. We had to join GATT as a complement to our participation in the IMF and the World Bank.

In regards to the second part of your question, you are right in saying that Algeria exports on the whole only petroleum and hydrocarbons, but it must organize its foreign trade in order to give itself the opportunity to create and develop other exports. Its participation in GATT would also enable it to take part in the negotiations which are under way on the organization of international trade to the benefit of countries which have products to export, whether these products are raw materials or products that can be linked to services. In any case, GATT has very complex rules and arrangements which cover problems pertaining to the protection of the domestic market. We should not play down the results which we could obtain from our participation in GATT. Thank you very much.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Mr. Minister, and goodbye.

Egypt

Musa on Damascus Declaration, Arab Solidarity

NC1301124394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1135 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Abu-Dhabi, 13 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that Egypt has requested that the issue of reviving Arab solidarity be included on the agenda of the next Arab League meeting, and has noted Egypt's support for the initiative of United Arab Emirates [UAE] President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan on this matter.

In an interview with the UAE paper AL-ITTIHAD today, Musa affirmed that there are no differences among the Damascus Declaration member countries. He said: Efforts and political views are unified and everyone supports the peace process. We all are against extremism and want economic reform and our stances on all problems and crises are unified.

He added that turning the Damascus Declaration into an economic bloc is a good idea and that it is important that we should ensure the success of this idea. He sBid that there is an enormous opportunity to revive the Damascus Declaration because there is a consensus on the need to support it in the face of regional developments.

Musa expected the Syrian-U.S. summit to give momentum to the Syrian-Israeli track of the peace negotiations and said that the situation will become extremely dangerous if the summit yields nothing.

He noted that Syrian-Egyptian coordination in economics and development has accomplished a great deal, and that this is an age of cooperation and interests and not one of slogans.

On Egypt's view of reviving Arab solidarity, the Egyptian foreign minister said that there are some impediments, especially after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, that should be addressed. He added that contradictions still exist and that there are foreign currents that are trying to subvert the Arab region under various themes to undermine stability in the Arab world. Our task, he said, is to create stability in the Arab world, but this will not work without economic reform and genuine solidarity. He said that the issue should be discussed quietly and that we must be ready for change and deal with it united.

Protest Lodged With Sudan Over Dam Plans

NC1301211194 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 16

[Text] Egypt has sent a protest note to the Sudanese Government over its plans to build a dam on the Nile north of Khartoum. In the note, which was delivered by Egyptian Ambassador in Khartoum Hasan Jad-al-Haq last week, Egypt rejected the construction of any project on the Nile that could affect its share of water in accordance with the 1959 water-sharing agreement signed by the Nile basin countries.

Meanwhile, the Irrigation and Foreign Ministries are preparing scientific and political studies to confront any such project in the future.

This topic is expected to be placed on the agenda of the upcoming meeting of the Egyptian and Sudanese foreign ministers.

French Foreign Minister Continues Visit

Meets Prime Minister

NC1301140994 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi received French Defense Minister Alain Juppe, who is currently visiting Cairo, and his accompanying delegation at his office this afternoon. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting.

Discussion during the meeting focused on bilateral relations, the Middle East peace process, and regional and international issues of common concern.

Holds Talks With Musa

NC1301142194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jan (MENA)—During talks held today chaired by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, Egypt and France reached agreement to convene a ministerial meeting of foreign ministers of Mediterranean countries next summer.

In the joint news conference held with Alain Juppe after the talks between them, 'Amr Musa stated that the objective of such a meeting is to strengthen relations of cooperation in the Mediterranean Sea region and specify the fields of action in this direction. He clarified that this meeting will be preceded by a preparatory meeting attended by intellectuals and diplomats. The Egyptian foreign minister said his talks with his French counterpart touched on current international issues, topped by the peace process in the Middle East, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Mediterranean Sea area, and bilateral relations between Egypt and France.

During the news conference, Juppe affirmed that they discussed problems of a regional and international nature, concentrating on the peace process, which is backed by Egypt and France, as well as cooperation within the framework of the Mediterranean basin.

He said France asserted its interest in cooperation among the Mediterranean Sea countries, adding that it is one of these and is interested in every aspect of cooperation among them, politically, economically, and socially. It is also interested in establishing peace in the region.

Juppe praised Egypt's role in pushing the peace process forward as decisive and active. France is also interested in pushing this march forward, since it has hosted the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators.

Speaks on Bosnia, Iraq, Iran

NC1301194294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1735 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jan (MENA)—Visiting French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe has described his talks with President Husni Mubarak and other Egyptian officials as positive and fruitful.

He said in a news conference this evening that Egypt and France are willing to promote their relations, especially in the fields of investment, culture, and encouragement of Francophonism in Egypt.

On the Middle East peace process, Juppe said France has supported this process since the Oslo declaration, and is eager for its timetable to be implemented so that it will not be obstructed.

He emphasized the importance France attaches to Lebanon's fate in the comprehensive regional settlement. Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity must be preserved, and the settlement must not be achieved at Lebanon's expense, he said.

Juppe said that in his talks in Egypt, cooperation in the Mediterranean region was discussed. Egypt and France represent a Mediterranean power, and we are determined to intensify our dialogue in the economic and security spheres, he said.

He said Egypt was the first to call for a Mediterranean forum, and added: We have contributed to this idea since November, and 'Amr Musa and I decided this morning to prepare for a semi-official meeting next summer "in the same way unofficial European meetings are held."

On the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the NATO meetings, Juppe said his country accepts any criticism except that of being careless. He said France made the biggest efforts to stop the tragedy and sent 6,000 soldiers to that region. He noted that those soldiers are subject to many risks, and that there have been many victims.

The French minister said his country has also sent humanitarian relief and transferred hundreds of millions of ECUs for relief operations, which is a tremendous European and French effort.

Juppe said that in the recent NATO meeting, France demanded that the question of Bosnia-Herzegovina be listed on the agenda although everybody else asked that the issue not be discussed.

He explained that the 16 NATO members supported the European political plan, which says that each community must have enough land to survive and have its own outlet as a basis for a peaceful settlement.

If this plan is signed, he said, those countries will be ready to send some 50,000 soldiers to the field. He added: The United States has expressed readiness to contribute half this force, and we are ready to help the United Nations implement its resolutions by sending planes today if we are asked. However, no one asked us to attack Serbian positions.

Juppe said there are issues related to two security regions. The first is Srebrenica, around which the Serbs are tightening the noose and where France expressed readiness to replace the Canadian forces, which are willing to withdraw. The second is Tuzla airport, which is under shelling by Serbia.

Juppe said France demanded that Tuzla airport be reopened, and French planes will land there to deliver humanitarian aid. If we are attacked, we will retaliate, he said.

He stressed that the peaceful solution is the actual solution, and for it to happen, the formation of a court to punish those who violate human rights and perpetrate crimes against their peoples must be considered.

The French foreign minister pointed out that his country made great financial efforts concerning the Bosnian problems, spending 500 million ECU. It has also made several initiatives over the past nine months, but all these efforts failed, and that is why we were active in the NATO meeting a few days ago, he said.

Juppe noted the possibility of misunderstanding the international and European positions toward Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially by the Islamic world. He said Egypt is affected by this misunderstanding, where Europe is accused of abandoning Bosnia and allowing human rights violations there to go unpunished. He said: But today is not September 1991; it is January 1994. Things have changed, and Europe is now right in drafting the only peace plan proposed.

The French foreign minister pointed out that the operations concerning Srebrenica and Tuzla are useful for humanitarian purposes, but will not solve the basic problem. He stressed the need to work out a peaceful plan to stop the bloodshed and reinforce the airlift to Sarajevo. He said: We warned the Serbs that we would attack them from the air if they fail to comply with these resolutions.

If the NATO resolutions are not implemented, he said, the alliance's prestige will be put to the test.

Asked about the restoration of relations between the Vatican and Israel, Juppe expressed the belief that this is natural, positive and it helps advance the peace process. "If the PLO has recognized Israel, I wonder why the Vatican should not," he said.

He said the Oslo accord will not solve the problem of Jerusalem, which will be solved later.

Asked about France's position toward Libya and Iraq, Juppe said: Concerning Libya, we demand that the UN resolutions and international law be implemented. We also demand that Iraq implement the UN resolutions. He noted that Iraq had implemented some resolutions, but said that all resolutions must be implemented.

Juppe called for destroying all mass-destruction weapon networks in Iraq; ensuring the safety of Kuwaiti territory; Iraq's recognizing the borders and refraining from changing them; and Iraq's refraining from practicing violence against population centers.

The French foreign minister said: I would like to point to some progress concerning Libya. I have heard information on this topic and have read how far things have gone concerning some proposals, but no progress has been made in this field.

On French-Iranian relations, Juppe said that his country shared the European view which stresses the need for a critical dialogue with Iran. He said the policy of isolation toward that country is futile. We will ask for official guarantees that Iran will abandon terrorism and respect international laws, he said.

Mubarak Warns Youth Against 'Terrorism'

NC1301170094 Cairo MAYU in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 1

[Report by Chief Editor Samir Rajab]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] I asked the president: Let us move on to political matters. When will the national dialogue that you called for during the opening of the parliamentary session of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council start?

The president answered: It is most likely that the dialogue will start in mid-February. Studies continue now and meetings are taking place with many figures since the dialogue includes all national forces.

In his special statements, President Mubarak spoke about his hopes for his citizens during 1994 and what he wants from them so that Egypt would always remain cherished, honorable, strong, and stable.

I asked the president: What would you like to tell the people with the beginning of the new year?

He answered in an optimistic tone laced with warm intonations of love and cordiality: I wish them goodness, the best of things. Egypt is our country. It is our duty to provide it with everything that will elevate it and realize progress for it, especially since its sons are the best, happy to be sheltered under its wings. Undoubtedly, Egypt will never be ungenerous with its own sons.

At the same time, I tell our young sons: Do not be misled by calls of perversion. Do not get involved in any terrorist operations the objective of which is Egypt's stability and security, no matter what the material temptations or psychological pressures are, because, in the end, you will pay the price yourselves and you will be harmed by your own actions.

The president then added: Those who are trying to exploit you want to destroy the country. But Egypt will never be ruined, thanks to God's help and protection and the cohesion of its sons. I hope all the parties will contribute toward confronting terrorism which does not differentiate among people. Everyone, without exception, will suffer from the negative effects of terrorism.

The president said in his exclusive statements: I hope every citizen will work to increase production and plan his family, because a population increase has dangerous repercussions. Our responsibility is to balance revenues and expenditures. We need to understand that this cannot be realized so long as population growth continues at the same rate.

Mr. President, what do you want to tell the Arab brothers with the beginning of the new year?

President Mubarak answered: I call on the Arab brothers to close past files. We should all start a new age based on solidarity and unity, and away from hegemony and control. All the people of the world cooperate with each other for joint interests. Therefore, how nice it would be for us Arabs to heed the experiences of others, especially since our potentials and resources in various fields are huge and varied. [passage omitted]

Concluding his exclusive statements, President Mubarak affirmed that Egypt has exerted and continues to exert huge efforts to push the peace process forward out of its conviction that the people of the region should live in friendship and build their lives on new bases.

We are trying as much as possible to overcome difficulties with the objective of bringing viewpoints closer so that we can realize our objectives.

Mr. President, are you optimistic that the Gaza-Jericho agreement will soon be implemented?

The president answered with optimism and confidence: God willing, the Gaza-Jericho agreement will soon be implemented. These are the first steps of a permanent and peaceful solution and all parties know that very well.

Mubarak Discusses Economic Plans With Ministers

NC1301130294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1138 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak held a meeting at the Presidential Office in Heliopolis today. It was attended by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi; Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of the Public Business Sector and minister of state for administrative development and environment affairs; Mahmud Muhammad Mahmud, minister of economy and foreign trade; and Engineer Muhammad Khulayf, chairman of the Egyptian Sugar Company.

The prime minister said afterward that the two basic issues discussed at the meeting were Egypt's economic ties with world and regional countries and the Sugar Company's projects, especially since the company has foreign investment ventures. He said that the company head explained these projects.

The prime minister said these projects include setting up a number of sugar factories in African and Middle Eastern countries.

He praised the sugar company, which he said enjoys a very strong position and has industrial equipment and a design center that can fulfill Egypt's needs.

He said sugar prices currently rise and fall according to the production costs and that there are no problems on this matter.

He noted that an integrated study on customs is currently being compiled and that it will be discussed next week with sugar exporters, importers, and producers to determine whether sugar will be subject to customs fees.

The prime minister said a similar meeting will be held next week to discuss customs fees on fertilizers between officials from the Ministry of Industry and Economy, national fertilizers companies, and customs experts.

Commentary Views NDP's Bid for Dialogue

NC1301202994 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "National Dialogue and the Duty of Protecting the Citizen's Right to Security and Stability"]

[Text] It is certain that all the political parties in Egypt are now fully prepared to enter into a dialogue on the fundamentals of national life, particularly with regard to the issues of security and stability. Security and stability are necessary conditions for the continuation of the economic reform and development programs. These programs have so far achieved results that have drawn praise from several international economic circles.

In his first meeting with the newly formed National Democratic Party [NDP] General Secretariat, President Mubarak asked the Secretariat to get in touch with other political parties with a view to launching a national dialogue.

Following Mubarak's meeting with the NDP Secretariat, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that the Secretariat has been in touch with all political parties. Al-Sharif said that there are many points of agreement with those parties and only a few of disagreement. This boosts the hope that the national dialogue will produce constructive and positive results that would have a beneficial effect on the country's future.

There is no doubt that this clear desire of the Egyptian political parties [to hold a national dialogue] is a response to the sincere call made by President Mubarak some time ago, in a bid to serve the interests of the country and the nation. President Mubarak called for that dialogue to be a fair and honest one in which all parties, including the NDP, should rise above their rivalries. President Mubarak promised that the NDP's role, as the majority party, will be one of creating the appropriate atmosphere for a successful national dialogue.

We have not the least doubt that we are all patriots, seeking to promote the general interest of our beloved country and nation. Our profound commitment to democracy, reiterated by President Mubarak, is an endeavor in which all of us should get involved. Democracy is the wind that will bring country's ship to safe shores. It is the only and best guarantee against excesses of all sorts.

Democracy involves much more than rhetoric. Every one of us should insist on democracy being upheld. We have to create the right atmosphere for every citizen to exercise his constitutional rights in such a way as to shore up the country's national unity and ensure that anyone who is tempted to jeopardize the nation's security and stability and undermine the livelihood of the citizens is brought to justice.

It is our firm belief that the responsibility of protecting the nation does not rest solely with the government, but is a joint responsibility for both the people, who care for the country's future prosperity, and the government.

A look at the circumstances through which the country and nation are passing is enough to persuade us that our only recourse is to correct our mistakes. This, of course, is easier said than done. It involves a strong resolve and definite desire to repair the damage that the evil hands have done to our country's security and stability. The consequences of our failure to do that could be grave.

Therefore, we affirm that the outcome of national dialogue will lay the groundwork for national policies for many years to come, during which the nation may look forward to an improvement in their standards through the joint effort of the country's political parties.

Assembly Members Attack Government Policy

NC1201121594 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Jan 94 p 7

[Report by 'Abd-al-Jawad 'Ali]

[Text] The People's Assembly Committee entrusted with preparing the response to the government's policy statement continued its meetings yesterday under the chairmanship of deputy speaker Ahmad Hammadi. Most of the members launched a strong attack against the government, accusing it of failure in its domestic policies to serve the citizens and alleviate the burdens they shoulder as a result of rising prices and lack of services. This, they claimed, has led to an increase in negative attitudes and unwillingness to cooperate with state policy, and has given terrorists the chance to carry out activities to destroy the national economy.

Sa'd al-Shirbini, chairman of the People's Assembly Local Administration Committee, emphasized that terrorism is the fruit of indifference and negative attitudes among the people, who complain about prices and services and the spread of corruption in all state sectors. This is the reason for the rift between the people and the government. He called for administrative reform together with economic reform and for the removal of all reasons that have led to a negative attitude among the people. He also called for the genuine exercise of democracy involving all the parties, political forces, and the people without restrictions or prior conditions. He demanded that the retirement age must not be extended to give a chance to the young people to assume responsibility, prevent disappointment and despair, and have more effective participation in the process of development.

Faruq Mutawalli (independent) called for the formulation of a foreign policy to confront the results from the establishment of a Middle Eastern market, the implementation of the GATT agreement on international free trade, and Sudan's plan to establish a new dam on the Nile, which could affect Egypt's share of the water.

'Abd-al-Fattah Diyab, from the National Democratic Party, noted that the development of the village has become a mere slogan, as there is no development in the villages. This is despite the fact that villages are the basis of development and production. The government should have given villages more importance but this failure has led to despair among the peasants, who are more committed to paying taxes and contributing to the increase in production. He also noted that telephone services in the villages are very bad. What the government did was to install old and dilapidated telephone exchanges and cables just to claim that it had introduced telephones to the villages. They would have been better without it!

Diya'-al-Din Dawud (representative of the Nasirite Party) said: If no serious attempt is made to allow parties to exercise their activity among the people, there will be no political enlightenment and terrorism and extremism will always find a suitable climate to spread their subversive ideas among the youth. This is the responsibility of the government, because the security forces always restrict the activity of parties and prevent them from holding public meetings, forcing them to hold such meetings behind closed doors.

He called on the government to work for Arab unity. I call on President Mubarak to exert personal efforts to convene an Arab summit to discuss the dangers facing the Arab world, he said. He asked: What has happened to Egypt's unifying role in the Arab world?

Al-Alfi Reiterates Respect for Human Rights

NC1301122594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1021 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jan (MENA)—Minister of Interior Hasan al-Alfi has stressed Egypt's interest in and extreme eagerness to respect human rights and said that reports on human rights violations in prisons are false allegations aimed at tarnishing Egypt's image abroad.

After opening an exhibition of prison agency products last night, he said that Egypt is an advanced state with an ancient civilization and respects human rights within the framework of legitimacy and law. He noted that respect for human rights is being taught at the Police Academy and at police institutions.

He pointed out that some hardened inmates inflict injuries and say they were caused by police for revenge and then claim afterward that they were tortured.

The minister of interior affirmed the security forces' eagerness to respect human rights and said police victims outnumbered those of the terrorists during confrontations.

Answering a question on the new security strategy in light of the Arab interior ministers conference held in Tunis recently, he said there is a general agreement on views on security because crimes of violence and terrorism are now a phenomenon not only in Arab countries but in the world.

The minister of interior said work is continuously developing to curb crime and arrest criminals by modernizing agencies and training personnel.

New Antiterror Militias Said Selling Arms

NC1301214794 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 10 Jan 94 pp 12-13

[Report by 'Isam 'Abd-al-Jawad in Asyut]

[Text] Some 400 people in Asyut have received weapons and ammunition as part of the militia that security services in the governorate had organized to confront terrorism.

But only one month after the unprecedented move, differences erupted among the services that were behind the idea. Some say a number of citizens took the weapons to defend themselves against a backdrop of tribal revenge actions, and others stress that some of those who received the weapons sold them to terrorists, bullies, fugitives from justice, and highway robbers.

ROSE AL-YUSUF has also learned that those volunteers have not received antiterrorist training. The security agencies gave them weapons and ammunition without telling them what places to guard. The volunteers were only asked to attack extremists wherever they see them—something that did not happen, even in Upper Egypt, which is known for acts of revenge.

Those militias were not assigned to guard government facilities or take part in antiterror operations. Indeed, the security services denied that the militias existed, and that only added to the militiamen's confusion.

Some People's Assembly and Consultative Council members, and members of local councils in Asyut protested to Asyut Governor Major General Samih al-Sa'id and Security Director Major General Majdi al-Basyuni over the formation of the armed militias, some of whose members have abused the use of their weapons.

An official security source told ROSE AL-YUSUF that the security services are now working out a high-level plan to change the dynamics of antiterror operations in Asyut. Most of the equipment and individuals used in these operations have been withdrawn and replaced by forces highly trained in antiterror techniques. A number of police cars have also been replaced with modern vehicles that can easily move in agricultural areas and on mountains where terrorists hide.

The source said the plan seeks coordination between Asyut and a number of neighboring governorates to cut off the supply lines for the terrorist groups in Asyut.

On the role of the militias in Asyut, the source denied they play any role. The source even denied they exist, although ROSE AL-YUSUF stressed it had seen them and named some people who had actually received weapons.

The recent killing of Brigadier General Taha Tu'aymah in Dayrut and the subsequent arrest of terrorist Ahmad Diya' from Suhaj Governorate revealed a new development in the tactics of the terrorist groups in Upper Egypt. Diya's participation in that operation showed that elements from neighboring governorates, especially Suhaj and al-Wadi al-Jadid, are involved in Asyut attacks. Those governorates are used as supply sources for terrorist groups in Asyut, and Asyut terrorists flee and hide there. Ordinary citizens in Asyut are increasingly talking about this, especially since Asyut has the biggest regional university and thousands of students from various governorates, especially in Upper Egypt, go to study there.

The attack against Brig. Gen. Tu'aymah was the first of its kind in which terrorists from different governorates took part.

In another development, an Interior Ministry team spent five days in Asyut drafting an integrated plan for coordination with neighboring governorates to raid terrorists' hideouts in Asyut, al-Minya, Suhaj, and al-Wadi al-Jadid, and to guard the eastern side of Asyut to prevent infiltration of terrorists via the Red Sea.

In the al-Rahmah mosque in Asyut the Friday before last, the Islamic Group members said prayers without making any announcements or statements as they usually do. The mosque preacher asked members of the group to leave the mosque after prayers in small groups to avoid clashes with the heavy security force around the mosque. Not many people attended the prayers.

Shops owned by members of the terrorist groups continue their trade activity in Asyut without security interference, although a number of the shops were built along pedestrian streets without a license. The Asyut municipality avoids arguments with the owners and collects taxes in a friendly way, although some of them refuse to pay taxes because they believe it is against shari'ah.

Meanwhile, a curfew atmosphere still dominates the cities of al-Qusiyah and Dayrut although the security services lifted the curfew and told citizens they could go out.

Front To Be Formed Opposing Muslim Brotherhood

NC1301172794 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 10

[Text] Preparations are under way to establish a unified national front to confront the Muslim Brotherhood in all trade unions. The front will include all the political forces opposing the Muslim Brotherhood. Following the proclamation of the front, the participants will draw up its charter and by-laws. So far, the national committee and society of the "Young Lawyers," the "Young Doctors Front," "Egypt's Pharmacists Front," and the "Nationalist Engineers" have agreed to participate in the front.

The front's provisional general secretariat represented by Dr. Ahmad 'Awf, engineer Raja'i 'Abd-al-Malik, and attorney Ahmad Jum'ah will contact other unions' forces for membership purposes.

Muslim Brotherhood Said Financing Orphanages

NC1301204494 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 15

[Report by 'Abdallah Kamal]

[Excerpt] ROSE AL-YUSUF has obtained a new document detailing the extent of the Muslim Brotherhood's secret action. A report published by the "Orphan Child Project in November 1993" indicates that the Muslim Brotherhood distributes some 12 million pounds annually. The project, which is reported to be the Muslim Brotherhood' new secret organ, covers 20 governorates, and their expenditures have risen by 300 percent over the last three years.

According to the document, which bears the name "The Republic Report," the number of the Muslim Brotherhood's committees increased by 17 during this month. The committees are taking care of 154,043 orphans. Some 121,144 children receive a monthly payment of 10 pounds.

The project is being implemented by the Muslim Brotherhood-controlled Shari'ah Society through official channels. Those following up the project said it will allow the Muslim Brotherhood to be associated with some 150,000 children, who will later become sympathizers of the group. [passage omitted]

Three Policemen Shot Dead in Asyut

NC1301181194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1713 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jan (MENA)—A police warrant officer and two sentries were killed today when unknown assailants fired at them in front of a traffic police station in Asyut.

According to an Interior Ministry source, unidentified gunmen fired at the Bani Murr traffic police station, near al-Qusiyah, in Asyut Governorate today, killing Warrant Officer Kamil Ahmad Salim of the traffic police and police sentries 'Ali Husayn Shaybub and 'Abd-al-Majid 'Abd-al-'Al Shihatah. The assailants managed to escape. Police investigators and forensic experts are examining the shooting scene. Police have begun an intensive search for the attackers.

Libya

Foreign Bank Funds Diverted in 'Power Struggle'

NC1301183294 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 11

[Report by Fayzah Sa'd]

[Text] Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has appointed 10 financial advisers in charge of protecting the regime's wealth and oil revenues. Al-Qadhdhafi selected Central Bank Governor 'Abd-al-Hafiz Salatini as a top adviser. Al-Salatini is to be assisted by 'Umar al-Manshi; 'Abd-al-'Ati al-'Ubaydi; Sadiq Hajjaji, the president of the Arab-Hellenic Bank in Milano; and Sulayman al-Shuhumi, under secretary at the Unity Ministry. The five men are busy transferring Libyan assets in European banks to private accounts.

The value of these assets have been estimated at $3 billion and were withdrawn in cash and taken in bags to Libya. Some funds have been transferred to secret accounts in Swiss banks and some to personal bank accounts in Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Lebanon.

ROSE AL-YUSUF has learned that the transfer of Libyan funds is not only taking place due to the UN Security Council resolution freezing Libyan assets abroad but also due to the current power struggle in Libya between supporters of Abd-al-Salam Jallud and those of al-Qadhdhafi.

Transfers to accounts held by supporters of both men were made as a measure of their loyalties to the country's strongmen. It is expected that Libyan oil exports will be affected due to the ongoing power struggle. The roads running though the oil fields are no longer safe. Colonel Sa'id 'Uwaydat al-Qadhdhafi, commander of the Seventh Division stationed in Zahunah, has been ordered to move some of his units to al-Yarta'ah to protect oil shipping docks from possible attacks by clan militia. Some public transportation buses lately came under attacks involving robbery and murder.

Cash Assets Said Sufficient for '7 Years'

NC1301213794 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 32

[Unattributed report]

[Text] According to a Libyan diplomat, Libya has at its disposal $18 billion in cash, which it has withdrawn from banks. Therefore, the diplomat says, Libya can withstand international sanctions for another seven years, even if it were to face an oil embargo. The diplomat notes that there are 4 million people living in Libya whose basic—subsidized—needs of such goods as sugar, oil, and tomato puree amount to about $1.5 billion annually.

Al-Qadhdhafi Blames Fall in Oil Prices on West

LD1401053594 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1927 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Speech by leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to Benghazi citizens; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] We will not be taken for a ride, and we will not be trifled with another time. We have prepared, and training with weapons is taking place day and night for youths and old people and men and women. We are ready for confrontation in order to defend our right to live in peace, in freedom, and in pride on our land.

O brothers, we have to get ready now with one hand carrying weapons and the other having to carry the instruments for construction and production. We have, O brothers, to move now toward doing without the goods of the enemy, the equipment of the enemy. We must close our markets to the goods of the enemies. We must punish them economically as they have done to us and defy them as they have defied us

and declare to them our determination that we will resist regardless of the circumstances. [passage omitted]

We must not underestimate the anger of the Libyan people and the people's revolt being carried out by the Libyan people these days, and we must not underestimate the factors that have led to the Libyan people's anger and revolt these days in all parts of the free Libyan land. There is an infringement of which the Libyan people are aware, and the Western alliance has gone beyond the limits, crossed the red lines, and has blatantly interfered in peoples' internal affairs in the name of the United Nations—after they have killed the United Nations and replaced it with themselves. [passage omitted]

We have offered several olive branches and have told them: We befriend whoever shows friendship to us. We have tried through peaceful means and through all mediation and means and put forward all proposals to solve any dispute between us and the Western states because we do not want peace to be threatened in the Mediterranean Sea or North Africa. We do not want new collapses to take place in the Arab region.

They know that the Libyan system, which is based on direct people's democracy, is the safety valve in North Africa and the Arab homeland. Consequently, they do not want a safety valve in the Arab homeland. They want to remove all safety valves so that the Arab homeland blows up and collapses. They are now working day and night to destroy Egypt on your eastern borders and Algeria on your western borders. They destroyed Iraq before that, and now the conspiracies are being hatched against Sudan, Syria, and Libya. [passage omitted]

We will not forget this Western beast that is lying in wait across the sea. O brothers, we will not be betrayed once more. There is no friendship at all between us and those enemies. They wanted enmity, so let it be enmity between us and them until doomsday. We are separated from them by trenches and barricades.

O brothers, they want to destroy peoples by depriving them of their resources, but we in Libya are not disturbed as others whose oil has become worth less than the price of water.

We welcome the deterioration of oil prices because we want to get rid of oil, and we Libyans want to get used to living without oil. Every day when the price of oil tumbles, we clap and thank God. We want the price of oil to tumble until it reaches nothing because they have decided to subjugate the Libyan people using oil. They said the wound that would hurt Libya was oil. They said the will of the Libyan people depended on oil. They said the Libyan people would give up their sovereignty and independence for oil.

They based all their calculations on oil. You have to pay attention to this fact. It is the enemies who are plotting so that Libya's revolutionary and stubborn position and its defense of its pride depended on oil. If the West deprived Libya of oil, the Libyan people would surrender. The Libyan people would be vanquished, would forget their pride and independence, enabling the West to step into their homes, to desecrate them, and to take them into bondage and put them on the list of those who have surrendered.

O free Libyan people, we have to understand this fact. We have to make decisions now as if we are without oil. We have to decide to live in ease as if we have no oil since the enemy has based all his calculations and plots on depriving us of oil to subjugate us.

What is required, brothers, is that even if oil production is not cut off, even if they do not besiege the oil, even if they cannot do without Libyan oil, we must make provisions and prepare ourselves. From now on, we must decide to live without oil. We must educate ourselves individually and at the family level to live without oil. But, brothers, we cannot live without independence. We would die for independence. We cannot live without dignity, honor, and pride on the land of our fathers and ancestors. [passage omitted]

[passage omitted] We challenge them to talk about human rights to Germany or Japan. They only talk about human rights to you—the small, weak, and downtrodden peoples. Consequently, these peoples must expose this falsification—this false language and this international hypocrisy. This is a new international hypocrisy and a new international decline behind which are economic and military forces.

Small peoples must only get ready for confrontation. There is nothing in front of them but relentless fighting for their independence, sovereignty, and resources. There is nothing in front of peoples but defense—with all their forces and by getting ready to wage a long battle in order to safeguard the resources, children, independence, sovereignty, and freedom on their land. The long battle is not in the interest of the enemies. They want a short battle and a terrorist one. They want to terrorize us with missiles or aircraft, their bombs or their empty threats.

Brothers, they only want to terrorize us. They want a short battle where we will be intimidated by them, fear them, submit to them, surrender oil, ourselves, our land, our heritage, our future, and the future of our children and grandchildren to them. We must resolve to face up to them and prepare for a long battle, with perseverance and unparalleled patience and courage. [passage omitted]

The peoples of the Arab nation are imprisoned and tied up. They cannot go out to the streets and squares. Brothers, repression and suppressing the breeze of freedom will not prevent peoples from engaging in revolution. On the contrary, the stronger the repression, oppression, and suppression of the breeze and the sun of freedom, the more revolutionary people become. The revolution is coming. The Arab nation is now called upon to engage in revolution to save itself and its future.

The Arab nation is exposed to danger these days, brothers. Palestine has been sold in an auction sale, and so was Jerusalem. Egypt is being destroyed on orders from the western forces. What is happening in Egypt is a conspiracy to destroy the biggest Arab state, and what is happening in Algeria is a conspiracy by France and the western states in order to undermine the Algerian revolution and the second or third largest Arab state. Iraq was destroyed and divided

while the Arab nation was watching and listening, Iraq's destruction was also a western conspiracy. The West had ordered Iraq to occupy Kuwait, promising to back this occupation. When Iraq occupied Kuwait, the West destroyed and divided Iraq. [passage omitted]

They are bent on putting an end to the Arab nation, and they want a Jewish empire to be set up on your ruins. O Arabs, you must know this: A Zionist empire is coming from the Ocean to the Gulf, and not from the Euphrates to the Nile. [passage omitted]

Brothers, the Middle East problem will be solved when the 7 million Palestinian people return their land of Palestine, when Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian state, when we see on the map the democratic state of Palestine—not Israel, or Jacob, or Yitzhaq. The Middle East problem will be resolved when the Zionist entity is disarmed of its arms of mass destruction directed at every Arab state. Brothers, how can we recognize an alien state in the heart of the Arab homeland and armed with arms of mass destruction? [passage omitted]

O brothers, I am giving you facts and exposing the enemies' plans. This is what had been missing in 1911. We did not know anything about the plans of the European countries. We did not know the plan of the Italians. [passage omitted]

Today, I am here before you to expose the plans of these enemies, to expose the so-called international legitimacy, and to expose the so-called peace process in the Middle East. I am explaining the (?dangerous) conspiratorial plan against the Arab nation. This is not taking place against Libya only—but against Egypt, Algeria, Iraq, and Somalia. Egypt's turn will come after Iraq. They have destroyed Iraq quickly with military might. However, because of different conditions in Egypt and Iraq, they are now endeavoring to destroy Egypt through a long war of attrition aimed at finishing Egypt. The same plan that existed in the days of Jamal 'Abd al- Nasir is still being implemented on the Egyptian land.

The same is taking place in Algeria. It is a war of attrition carried out by the black French hand to bring Algeria to its knees and destroy it.

Then the turn of Libya and Syria will come. They believe that Libya's turn came before Egypt. This is a mistake. They started in Egypt before Libya. A war of attrition has been waged internally against Egypt. Orders to wage a war of attrition and to carry out operations near Egypt come from Germany, France, Britain, and America.

We say to those who believe that Libya is in danger that Egypt and Algeria are in a more dangerous situation than Libya. Libya is not in a dangerous situation yet. It has awakened and started preparing itself for confrontation. Libya will not be taken by surprise. First, it should cease its dependency on oil and move toward production. The people should be united with purified ranks to remove any breaches that will enable the enemy to infiltrate our ranks, brothers. [passage omitted]

These acts appear to be perpetrated internally by Islamic terrorist elements. This is wrong. This is the work of western intelligence inside Egypt.

What is happening in Egypt appears to be an Islamic, terrorist action from inside. This is not true. This is the action of western intelligence inside Egypt. Egypt is in danger before Libya. What is happening in Algeria is not the work of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] as they believe. This is the plot of the French black hand, and behind it are the western states. [passage omitted]

Libya is luckier and in good shape because, on the one hand, Libya has awakened. On the other hand, it is because Libya has a free people capable of taking to public squares and streets. They are a unified people consisting of one family because the Libyan people reject treason, eliminate treason in their ranks. They are trained to carry arms. [passage omitted]

O brothers, I incite you to confrontation and to get ready for the confrontation. The battle has not yet happened, but I tell you that this confrontation and this battle must be long. We must prepare for it so that we can make it last. If it is long, we will triumph. If we show fear, shake, or become terrorized from day one, we will lose the battle forever. We will become slaves forever, and they will take all our wealth and your wives and houses as they did in the past. They will not take anything into consideration and will never have any mercy on you.

I tell you brothers: Do not be afraid. Do not be frightened. Do not tremble. Do not be intimidated. Do not fear them. If the battle is long and led with patience and courage, we will triumph in the end, and we will defeat the enemies. The enemy is gambling. It is seeking a quick gain without a loss. Your enemy is a tradesman, a capitalist seeking a market, wealth, gold, silver, the resources of peoples. [passage omitted]

Your enemy is a greedy capitalist seeking markets, who wants to use the power of a capitalist state, political power, and military power to subjugate you, so that markets are opened up for his products and consumer goods afterwards, and so that you may become a consumer market for the products of Western states. [passage omitted]

Do you want to have the same fate as that of the Somali people? Do you want the same fate as the fate of the Algerian people? Do you want to have the same fate as the Iraqi people? Therefore, we must prepare ourselves beginning now. This enemy will not retreat if we say to it: Peace be upon you; we want peace, and we want friendship. [passage omitted]

What mistake was made by the Libyan people? What threat to peace was made by the Libyan people? What crime was committed by the Libyan people? They do not have any evidence, any response. They have been exposed even over the Lockerbie issue. They have bowed their heads before the world, after organizations not belonging to a state and without a political entity have been accused.

It might have been perpetrated by a thug, and what would the Security Council do if they discovered that a terrorist such as Carlos had blown up the airliner over Lockerbie? What would the Security Council do with Article 7 in the face of Carlos. What if it is proved that a secret, stateless

organization had blown up the Pan Am plane? What a predicament the Security Council is finding itself in now that it has been exposed. Look at the farce. This shows that the United Nations is finished, that the UN Charter is finished, that the Security Council is finished. It has now become the Western Security Council. The United Nations has become the Western United Nations against the small people. This is clear.

O brothers, I wish that good language, signs of friendship, and exchanges of interests between us and them would protect us from their evils. No, no, whatever you do, it is useless.

It is enough that we told France that we wanted to solve its case. Even the Libyan suspects in the UTA case themselves announced that they were prepared to stand trial in a French court if investigations were carried out with them first and proved that they needed to stand trial. The Libyan suspects announced it to the world and said they were prepared to be interrogated, and if investigations proved that they had to stand trial in France, they—such-and-such a person—were prepared to go.

Why has not France responded to that? France refused to solve its problem with Libya. That French position is against the Security Council, against the United Nations. How can the Security Council decide that Libya did not respond to the demands by the French investigating judge and that Libya must submit to the French requests? When Libya said: Let us respond to that investigation and even the suspects themselves said so, France refused to carry out the investigation so that it would not be humiliated. France refused to solve its problem with Libya.

We announce to the world: France refuses to solve its problem with Libya in support of its allies and sisters, America and Britain. How can the Arab countries not stick together? I am not talking about the people. The Arab peoples are wholly with us, but why is the stance of Arab governments not like that of the French Government? [passage omitted]

We want Arab governments to stand with their brothers, the Libyan people, as France did with its British and American brothers and governments. The Arab peoples are with us, are united with us, and are standing with us. I am not speaking of the people because they are poor, subjugated, tied up, or helpless. No Arab peoples can come out into a square like this. Governments are afraid of the masses, of the challenge by the masses, of the masses coming out to express support for the Libyan people. We challenge Arab governments to allow the masses of the Arab nation to go out to the squares and streets to express to the West that they are one Arab people, one Arab nation, one Arab cause, and have one enemy.

I, O brothers, am exposing to you the enemies' plot, the new international order that we must be aware of and in which friendship is useless. If you surrender, they will say: Why did you surrender? You have surrendered, now give me your oil. [passage omitted]

Even if you get an agent and tell him to come and rule Libya and get rid of the problem with the West, it will not work. Why? Because the West will tell him: Since you are an agent and you rule Libya, hand over the oil and the Libyan soil to set up bases, as well as the Libyan people to make them slaves, and political power and sovereignty.

That is what would happen. Therefore, why should you use an agent. Would you accept an agent to hand you over to America to solve your problem with the West? It would not work. It would not work. It is useless, of course. No, a thousand no's. The enemy is not shy. The enemy is scared, scared only of a confrontation. [passage omitted]

Talks on Cooperation Held With Ukrainian Official

LD1301161294 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] A Libyan-Ukrainian meeting was held in Tripoli this morning and was attended by the assistant secretary general in charge of international affairs at the General People's Committee of Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation [Foreign Ministry] and Mikhail (Pavlovich), head of the First Department at the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry. This meeting was also attended by a number of Libyan and Ukrainian experts and specialists from various fields.

The two sides discussed and examined ways to bolster and strengthen bilateral relations. They also reviewed draft agreements signed between the two countries in economic, commercial, financial, scientific, technical, and cultural fields, and they discussed ways to implement these agreements in the interest of both the Libyan and Ukrainian peoples.

Mauritania

Gambian President Ends Three-Day Visit

LD1301053994 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2030 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Gambian President Dawda Kairaba Jawara and his wife left Nouakchott today after a three-day official visit to our country. [passage omitted]

Earlier, President Jawara had answered journalists' questions. He expressed his sorrow at leaving this beautiful country after a pleasant and useful visit that enabled us, the president said, to have fruitful talks and to sign agreements between our countries. The Gambian president added that the trade ministers signed a trade agreement today aimed at strengthening exchanges in that field between the two countries.

The Gambian president said: As you have seen from the joint communique, we have specified other areas of cooperation in the energy, fishing, maritime, and air transportation fields. I think that all these fields will strengthen existing cooperation between our countries. Nothing remains except for me to thank my brother and friend, President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, for the warm welcome and generous and brotherly hospitality that I and my accompanying delegation received.

President Jawara held a one-on-one session with President Taya this morning. After the session, the two presidents signed the final communique, which reflected their identical points of views on all issues discussed. They expressed their will to develop and strengthen the friendly relations linking the two countries. [passage omitted]

Morocco

'Leading' Israeli Economic Delegation Arrives

TA1201144894 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 12 Jan 93 p 3

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer, Navit Zomer, and Washington-based correspondent Hayim Shibi]

[Text] Last night, a delegation of leading Israeli economic figures arrived in Rabat, the Moroccan capital, for a series of meetings.

The delegation includes Labor Knesset Member Rafi Edri; Dan Propper, president of the Industrialists' Association; Dani Gillerman, president of the Union of Chambers of Commerce; Klal Director General David Vinshel; Eytan Sheshinsky (of Kur); Bank Hapoalim Chairman 'Amiram Sivan; Mikha'el Federman of the Dan hotels; Dov Lautman of the Delta textile company; and other economic figures.

The delegation will hold meetings with the Moroccan prime minister, the finance minister, the commerce and industry minister, the agriculture minister, and other economic figures. This is a reciprocal visit, returning a visit in Israel by a Moroccan delegation.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres attribute great importance to the visit. They met the members of the delegation prior to their departure, and Peres told them: "The time has come for Israeli-Moroccan relations to move forward a step, be open, and be anchored in open agreements." Rabin added: "Economic ties between Israel and Morocco constitute a practical expression of the fruits of peace."

Hayim Shibi adds: Syrian businessmen have been invited to attend a meeting with Israeli entrepreneurs in Washington in February. The Syrians have not yet responded to the invitation. Entrepreneurs from the Middle East are expected to attend the meeting, in which the U.S. Commerce Department is involved.

Democratic Bloc Manifesto Urges Reforms

LD1301130594 Rabat MAP in English 1236 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Rabat, Jan. 13 (MAP)—Members of the opposition Democratic Bloc: the Istiqlal Party (PI), the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) and the Organisation of Democratic and Popular Action (OADP) issued Tuesday a joint manifesto on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the independence manifesto day celebrated Jan. 11 in Morocco.

In their manifesto, the three parties said they will remain loyal to the spirit of the independence manifesto and to democracy. They also renewed their attachment to their common unity action for the edification of a democratic, prosperous and modern Morocco under the leadership of a constitutional, democratic and social monarchy ensuring Moroccans freedom, justice, equality and dignity.

The manifesto also calls for a number of constitutional reforms for the consolidation of democracy in the country.

Parties Condemn Slowness of Democratic Process

LD1201090094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Yesterday three main Moroccan opposition parties condemned the slowness of the democratic process in Morocco. They reiterated the need to introduce real democracy. The three parties are the Istiqlal Party, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, and the Organization for Popular and Democratic Action.

Sudan

Minister on Placement on U.S. 'Terrorist' List

LD1401140394 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1140 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpts] We greet you and are pleased to host Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, the interior minister in fraternal Sudan, who is currently visiting the Great Jamahiriyah.

[Husayn] [passage omitted] There is a clear colonialist (?campaign). Five out of the seven states which have been listed as terrorist countries, and are on America's terrorism list, are Arab and Islamic states. And this for no reason other than these states have independent decisions and that these states want to develop and live in pride.

The issue is clear; they [as heard] now admit that the accusations on the basis of which this unjust blockade was imposed on the Great Jamahiriyah (?are groundless). They cast doubts on these accusations and all these have now collapsed. Despite this, the blockade continues. [passage omitted]

Why was Sudan put on the list of terrorist states? No incident has been proved and no terrorist action has been launched from Sudan, and Sudan has not experienced terrorism throughout its life. We have never heard of a Sudanese citizen participating in any terrorist operation. This is something which does not exist in the character and structure of the people of Sudan. When they said that they put us on the list of terrorist states, the Americans said that there were accusations by reliable sources. We told them [word indistinct] and we do not want these sources to be disclosed. We told them: We do not want you to disclose these sources, but to prove to us these facts. They have not been able to prove a single fact. Despite this Sudan was put on the list of terrorist states.

Former American President Carter denied this, because he visited Sudan [word indistinct] to announce that these accusations were unjustified. This is what was said by a former American president.

The issue is not about proved facts, but the whole matter is that any voice which is raised in the Arab nation to declare

the pride of this nation must be silenced, and anyone raising this voice must have a blockade imposed on him and must be humiliated. This is the issue. [passage omitted]

We reject injustice, this unjust blockade, and this list on which they put whoever they want without any evidence, and we reject the use of international organizations and meetings for personal goals. The United Nations has double standards and uses rules and means with which people are humiliated. [passage omitted]

President Briefed on Results of IGADD Meetings

EA1301171994 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, president of the Republic, acquainted himself in his office at the general command today with the results of the unofficial meetings between a government delegation and a committee of ministers from the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development, IGADD, which were recently held in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, under the chairmanship of the Kenyan foreign minister and in which the Sudanese Government took part with a delegation led by Mr. 'Abdallah Deng Niyal, minister of peace and rehabilitation.

In press statements following the meeting Mr. Niyal confirmed the government's readiness to negotiate with the rebel movement. He added that he conveyed to the meeting of the IGADD ministers the government's commitment to what was mentioned in the recommendations and resolutions of the national dialogue conference for peace as a basis for negotiation. He pointed out that the government's stand on a cease-fire is part and parcel of the comprehensive agreement. His excellency restated the government's readiness to sit at a negotiations table with the rebel movement at any time or place specified by the committee of ministers of the IGADD states. He proclaimed the necessity of stopping the fighting, explaining that it affects the progress of negotiations between the two sides.

Al-Bashir Grants Nationality to 1,000 Copts

NC1301175194 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 9 Jan 94 p 9

[From the "Brothers" page]

[Text] The AL-INQADH AL-WATANI newspaper reports that Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir has issued a decision granting Sudanese nationality to some 1,000 Copts living in Sudan. The newspaper says al-Bashir gave these instructions during his meeting with a Coptic delegation led by Bishop Daniel, head of the Coptic Church in Khartoum. The newspaper quotes al-Bashir's allegation that the government serves all Sudanese, regardless of their religions and creeds!! Several thousand Copts and Christians live in Sudan. They originally came from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and other Middle East countries.

The al-Bashir government has recently come under heavy criticism because of its continuing persecution of Christians in the south and the escape of over 100,000 northern Christians to Western states.

Chinese Delegation Begins Visit 13 Jan

EA1401121594 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Mr. Qian Qichen, the Chinese deputy State Council chairman and foreign minister, arrived at Khartoum Airport at 1900. He was received at the airport by Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, vice president of the Republic, and by a number of ministers and ambassadors accredited to Khartoum, in addition to members of the Chinese Embassy in Khartoum.

Mr. Qian Qichen made media statements following his arrival in which he expressed his pleasure at his first visit to Sudan. He said: I am pleased to seize this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Government of China and its people, the greetings and good wishes for the new year to the government and people of Sudan. He said that China and Sudan are bound by the links of a traditional friendship dating back to a remote time. He explained that the 35-year-old relations between Sudan and China had greatly developed. Mr. Qian Qichen said that during his visit he will hold talks with officials centering on relations between the two countries, in addition to international issues of common interest and conditions in the region, affirming that the visit will contribute towards strengthening friendship and understanding between the two peoples and consolidating cooperation between our two countries.

Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih held a dinner party at the Friendship Hall in honor of the visit by the Chinese deputy chairman of the State Council.

Ajo Explains Decision To Join Opposition

PM1301134294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Jan 94 p 4

['Uthman Mirghani report: "Resigning Sudanese National Assembly Deputy Speaker Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: National Front Controls Regime, Leading Sudan To Collapse"]

[Excerpts] London—Aldo Ajo, deputy speaker of the Sudanese Transitional National Assembly (parliament), has justified his breakaway from the Sudanese Government and joining the opposition by saying that the country has reached the stage of complete collapse.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT after he announced his decision to break away from the government, he added that "Sudanese citizens' conditions have deteriorated badly, and the collapse now includes all aspects of life, economic, social, political, and security."

Aldo Ajo accused the National Islamic Front, led by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, of destroying state institutions. He said: At least 40,000 people have been dismissed from civil service, the Army, and the other security forces. He said that many capable and experienced people have been dismissed and replaced by cadres from the Front. [passage omitted]

He went on: "With regard to security, no citizen feels secure at present. With regard to the judiciary, there is no longer justice in the usual sense, because most of the senior judges have been dismissed and replaced by judges from the Front

throughout the country—which has made the judiciary in the country a partisan body designed to protect the Front's elements and interests. The same applies to the police, whose elements have been exposed to dismissal and displacement. In a nutshell, there is no justice in the usual sense in Sudan." On the situation in southern Sudan Aldo accused the government of escalating the war. He said that "the government has moved the war to new dimensions, raising the jihad slogan for the first time and using Islam in an entirely unlawful manner to mobilize people and prompt them to fight their fellow citizens."

He added that "some people and imams say in mosques that what is happening in the south is not a jihad in the Islamic sense, but the government silences or arrests them."

He said that the government thinks that "forcible Islamization is the only means to unify Sudan." He said that these practices have angered many southerners and led to the total collapse of trust between north and south. [passage omitted]

Attacking the government's foreign policy, he said: There is no clear well-planned policy, and the statements issued by the foreign minister appears to be completely different from what is issued and exercised by other elements. He added: "We feel that Minister Abu-Salih makes statements aimed at repairing foreign relations, while other organizations like the popular world friendship organization and the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference, led by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, continue their own policies. In fact the state follows the decisions and plans of these organizations."

He went on: The policy of these organizations is hostile toward all the Arab regimes in the region and toward the world as a whole, because the regime wants to export the model of its revolution. He said that Sudan has begun to receive extremist elements from outside and has begun to know terrorism for the first time in its history. And that "planning and training for the foreign extremist elements are provided in Khartoum, namely in places like mosques and private farms." [passage omitted]

On his position on the proposal of self-determination for southern Sudan, Aldo said that "the Sudanese have forgotten the separation proposals in the south since 1972. Separation was not even raised after the war broke out again in 1983. But the government's policies, its escalation of the war, and its raising of the jihad slogans have split the country and caused the southerners to raise the self-determination question once again."

He added that self-determination does not necessarily mean separation. But people's right to choose remains a political right which cannot be ignored, especially if the present regime continues its escalation and annihilation policies against the people in the south. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

President Ben Ali Receives EC Commissioner

LD1401002894 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali this morning received at Carthage palace Mr. Manuel Marin, the first vice president of the European Commission in charge of cooperation policy for development.

Following the meeting, the European official said that his talk with the president was important and extremely useful and was characterized by openness, pointing out that this was due to Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's clear and far-sighted political views towards Tunisia's relations with the Mediterranean region, in general, and with the European Union [EU]. He expressed happiness for the forthcoming start of negotiations with Tunisia over the new partnership agreement between our country and the EU, hoping that during the second half of this year, a final partnership formula would be reached.

Mr. Manuel Marin made clear that technical consultations will take place between the two sides in order to look into "the terms appropriate to the Tunisian economy which we should respect," saying that "if the final formula is the free exchange which has great importance to the Tunisian economy and its future, we should also acknowledge the need for the Tunisian economy to be adequate to the new framework of cooperation in the best of ways. In conclusion he expressed confidence for the partnership agreement between Tunisia and the EU to acquire the utmost possible importance and use for both sides.

Amnesty Allegations of Violations Refuted

LD1201231494 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] There is a strong reaction from Tunisia following the accusations made by Amnesty International: the humanitarian organisation claims in a report made public today that, despite the government's pledges in the field of human rights, torture and illegal arrests continue. Amnesty also specifies that the repression affects not just the Islamists, but also the government's detractors, notably members of the banned Communist Party. There has been an immediate reaction from the authorities refuting [these allegations] en bloc. Listen to Secretary of State for Information Fathi Houidi, speaking to Rida Boughezi:

[Begin Houidi recording] This is in complete contradiction with the real situation experienced by Tunisians in an open, tolerant country, where respect for human rights derives from a free political choice which is reasoned and open to change. I want to point out, in any case, that Amnesty's choice of a date to publish this new report on Tunisia has not been made without ulterior motives. It comes at a time when the country is preparing for free elections, organised after an amendment of the electoral law, which guarantees political pluralism within the parliament, and at a time when an exceptional revision of the electoral lists—hailed by observers and the opposition parties—has just been made, and finally at a time when Tunisia's success is being cited here, there and everywhere as an example. It is this precise moment which Amnesty has chosen to bring out this report and this communique, in which, in my view, prejudice competes with an intention to wreak harm. We knew that Amnesty had reached a point where it was not very careful of the truth; we were not so aware that it had also become so extensively manipulated by the fundamentalists,

because it is doing nothing other than embracing their ideas and adopting all their arguments, which are false. [end recording]

Al-Nahdah Leader Views 'Zionist' Plans

NC1301140094 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 4 Jan 94 p 8

[Commentary by Shaykh Rached Ghannouchi, the leader of Tunisia's al-Nahdah Movement, entitled: "The Region and the World Poised for a New Lining of Forces"]

[Text] The leaders of the Zionist gangs in Palestine and elsewhere, through public statements and the use of their awesome international media muscle, seek to turn Arab and international public opinion against an imminent danger, one that threatens to wreck the stability of the Arab region and the world and undermine civilization, peace, security, and prosperity. This danger, they maintain, is fundamentalism, a.k.a. religious extremism or political Islam.

The Zionist movement gave the go-ahead for this international campaign against Islam. The campaign got going with the collapse of the Soviet Union and cruised through the catastrophic Gulf War and the launch of the Madrid conference for a settlement.

The campaign found a welcoming ear in Arab regimes faced with a worsening political and economic crisis, mounting social and political demands, and the challenge of Islamic opposition. The campaign also reinforced the Western traditional view of Islam as a threat to Western interests and agents in the Islamic world.

All this led, with an accelerating pace, to the emergence of a new lining of forces and interests on the Arab and Islamic scene. The handshake between Yasir 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin was a symbolic milestone on a path that led several Arab regimes, both in the Arab Maghreb and the Gulf, to flirt openly with the Zionist entity. Those Arab regimes began exploring the possibilities of normalizing ties and exchanging interests with the Zionist entity, even ahead of a formal recognition. The Arab Maghreb regimes began looking into the prospects for security, tourism, and cultural exchange with the Zionist entity. The Gulf countries began looking into the economic aspect and to contemplate lifting the boycott. All this is a measure of the noose tightening around Egypt, the largest Arab country, which Israel still fears.

These developments are occurring behind a smokescreen of rhetoric about the fundamentalist danger. A wider and more dangerous deception of the masses is under way, the purpose of which is to divert their attention from the real danger to their civilization, and historical and economic integrity. It is, namely, the Zionist entity.

The Zionist entity, having usurped Palestine, holy Jerusalem, and Arab land, is ready for a more dangerous round of expansion in which it will seek to dominate the region economically and culturally. The Zionist entity will seek to change the region's identity and turn it from an Arab and Islamic world aspiring to unity and liberation, and restoring its prestige and cultural vibrancy to a Middle East region in which there is no room for Islam and Arabism. The choicest place, economically, politically, and militarily, will be reserved for Israel. The Zionist entity threatens to bury the hopes and dreams of our nation under the ruins of this region.

So where does the real threat to Palestine and its honorable Jerusalem, and the Arab and Islamic entity and its aspiration to unity lie? Does it really lie in fundamentalism and independent, comprehensive development, as the Zionist entity and the regimes advocating a peaceful solution—primarily Tunisia, Egypt, and Algeria—like to propagate? Or does the impending danger threatening the nation lie in Zionism and its allies and associates, and in dictatorship and corruption?

Against this blatant defiance of the nation, its identity, and aspiration to freedom and unity—the defiance that got the nation and its resistance elements warmed up—ideologies and policies have been restructured and reincarnated. The early signs of this can be seen in the Palestinian national movement, where there is a center of challenge, a crater, and the theater of the conflict between the proponents of a settlement within the framework of "the sole legitimate representative" [reference to the PLO] and its opponents as represented in the 10 Palestinian factions that constitute the strategic alliance between the Islamists and the leftist, nationalist current.

Judging by the historic status that the Palestinian cause assumed among the circles of the pan-Arab, Islamic, and nationalist struggle, and by the challenges the Zionist entity poses the nation's existence, we expect a new strategic Palestinian structure to extend up to and beyond the struggling arenas in the Arab and Islamic worlds.

If this is the case, then two camps will emerge in the coming years. The first will be made up of the nationalists, the pan-Arab, and Islamic regimes and movements that insist on pursuing the goals of the Islamic, pan-Arab, and national struggle for independence, freedom, unity, and justice on the land of Islam, and democracy. This camp will be up against a second camp embracing the regimes, movements, and currents that wager on normalization with the Zionist entity, sacrificing the pan-Arab objectives, and on diminishing the Islamic role and message. Their only road to this will be violence and dictatorship.

The dimensions and scope of such a battle go beyond the Palestinian and even the Arab, Islamic entity to the human struggle, because of the Zionist entity's influence worldwide and its expansionist ambitions on every level. It perpetuates the eternal struggle between right and wrong, progress and backwardness, between the powers of liberation and arrogance, and between prophets and idols. What a great battle, a splendid gift sent by heavenly providence in the hand of Zionism and its allies to reorganize the ranks of the nation and mobilize them for a clear cause. (The unbelievers plot and plan, and God too plans, and the best of planners is God.) [Koranic verse]

Kuwait

Foreign Minister Views Gulf, Arab Relations

LD1301203194 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1521 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Sharjah, 13 January, KUNA—In a press statement issued here today, the first deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, stressed the success of the State of Kuwait on all fronts with regard to the protection of its sovereignty and independence. He refused to say that concluding defense treaties with the great powers meant Kuwait's failure on the Arab and Gulf fronts.

In a statement to the weekly magazine AL-SHURUQ, he said: "Everybody knows that all the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member-states put the lives of their sons at risk to liberate Kuwait. We are still, after the liberation, going ahead with coordinating joint defense among the GCC states, which proves that cooperation among them is successful".

On the Arab front, he added: "There are Arab countries which participated in the liberation war, such as Egypt and Syria," pointing out that this coordination had continued later on within the framework of the Damascus Declaration, which includes these two countries alongside the six GCC states.

Shaykh Sabah denied the existence of external pressure on the State of Kuwait regarding the direction of its policy, pointing out that the recent visits of Western personalities to Baghdad were made for a specific reason, namely the release of Western hostages imprisoned by the Iraqi regime.

He stressed the continuation of the isolation of the Iraqi regime for its refusal to comply with all UN resolutions in connection with its aggression on the State of Kuwait, pointing out that: "No country could extend its bridges to a regime which inflicts starvation and homelessness to its people and practices the most cruel torture against it".

Shaykh al-Sabah denied the allegations that Kuwait's statements calling for distinction to be made between the Iraqi regime and the Iraqi people were in variance with actual practices, and stressed that Kuwait had helped the Iraqi people with food and medicine, particularly those expelled by the Iraqi regime in the north and in the south to whom humanitarian aid was sent. He further said: We do make a distinction between the regime and the people and it does not please us at all to hear about a fraternal people beset by hunger and poverty.

On whether he expected success in forthcoming days to efforts days aimed at bringing about a reconciliation with the adversary states that supported Iraq in its aggression against the state of Kuwait, Shaykh al-Sabah asked: On what basis would these efforts succeed and reconciliation be brought about.

He added: First, the problem must end, and then reconciliation begins, but if reconciliation comes now, it would be absolutely useless. Kuwait has, in fact, specified the conditions for a reconciliation with the adversary states to the effect that these states must announce their recognition of the UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait.

In his statement, the Kuwaiti first deputy prime minister and foreign minister expressed the hope that harmony would prevail and all the accumulations resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait would disappear. The invasion, he said, had frozen everything, including peace which he hoped would be realized. He further said: So long as differences exist in the Arab world, everything will remain suspended and frozen.

In his assessment of the current events regarding the Arab-Israeli settlement, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said: "We welcomed the Palestinian-Israeli agreement as a first step." He added that he "hopes that this step will lead to an agreement in all processes, otherwise there will not be any progress towards peace."

Regarding the GCC's failure to reach a total union so far along the lines of the European Maastricht Treaty, Shaykh Sabah said: "The European Council is over 50 years old and despite this it has not taken its final shape yet. By contrast the Gulf Cooperation Council was created only 14 years ago." He added: "It is true that we have not realized all the hopes pinned on the Council, but we should not ignore the fact that many of these have been realized." He further said: "We all hope to achieve the remaining aspirations in the coming years."

In reply to a question on whether he thought that the success of the GCC as a formula for regional cooperation was due to a weakening of the Arab League's role, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad indicated that the Cooperation Council did not come from outside the framework of the Arab League, but that it had been set within the framework of the Arab League Charter which stipulates that Arab countries should cooperate among themselves.

He also stated that the Council continued to play its part in reinforcing the Arab League and making its role more effective. He added that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the state of disunion and division which ensued led to a fragmentation of the Arab decision. He also deplored the fact that this had led to the weakening of the role of the Arab League to the point of marginalization.

Draft Law on Compulsory Mobilization Explained

LD1401103194 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0911 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Kuwait, 14 Jan (KUNA)—Colonel Hamad Sumayt, head of the human resources department, said in press statements published here today that a new draft law on compulsory mobilization has been prepared in line with future plans for conscription. He added in an exclusive interview with AL-WATAN: Our main objective is to entrench the concept of conscription, which has become a tangible reality. He further said that these endeavors are aimed at making use of the conscripts' skills and transferring these conscripts to the units best suited to their qualifications and expertise.

In reply to a question, Col. Sumayt denied the existence of favoritism or distinction between conscripts, and indicated that rumors in this respect are untrue and unrealistic.

Col. Sumayt also touched on the issue of sanctions and said: "The Conscription Law has given many rights to the conscript, and has provided for some sanctions ranging from added time to fines and imprisonment." He added: "If the person subject to military duty fails to present himself, six months will be added to the period of his conscription. The additional period would be reduced to two months if the person joined the army within 15 days after the deadline. The person would be referred to a court to stand trial in accordance with Article 29 of the law, which provides for jail sentences or fines if he fails to present himself for a second time."

In conclusion, Col. Sumayt said: "If the person subject to military duty fails to present himself after the legal age of conscription, which is 30 years, he will be referred to a court to stand trial in accordance with the provisions of Article 30. He could then receive a maximum jail sentence of three years or be asked to pay a maximum fine of 1,500 Kuwaiti dinars."

United Arab Emirates

Iranian Spokesman's Remarks on Islands Assailed

PM1301170294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Jan 94 pp1, 4

['Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sadiqi report: "Abu-Dhabi Rejects Tehran's Call and Renews Insistence on Peaceful Dialogue"]

[Text] Abu-Dhabi—Responsible United Arab Emirates [UAE] sources have deplored the statements made by Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmud Mohammadi criticizing the UAE's position on the islands issue. These statements, they said, contained a number of unacceptable prevarications.

They added that the first prevarication was the description of the dispute between the UAE and Iran as "a misunderstanding," a description which belittles the UAE's just demands and its historical and legal rights to its three islands of Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu-Musa. The second prevarication, they said, was describing the UAE as intransigent despite the fact that it was the UAE which sought dialogue through repeated initiatives, beginning with the first round of negotiations between the two countries in September 1992, followed by the meeting between Shaykh Hamdan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, and Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on the sidelines of the Islamic foreign ministers conference in Karachi in March last year, and ending with the Iranian foreign minister's visit to Abu-Dhabi in May of the same year, as a result of which the UAE softened the intensity of its media's concentration on the islands issue although it was aware of the harm this could cause.

The sources said that the UAE has declared and continues to declare that it insists on a peaceful solution of the problem of the islands, that it seeks a resumption of the dialogue with Iran on that problem, and that it is Iran which is refusing to resume the dialogue, on the pretext that drawing up a framework for dialogue would mean making preconditions.

The sources pointed out that a dialogue without a clear framework is unacceptable because it would undermine the foundations on which the UAE efforts to regain its rights to the three islands are based.

The sources also said that the UAE does not want Iran "to directly acknowledge the UAE's historical and legal rights to the islands but to accept the principle of peaceful dialogue and to let international legitimacy and international law be the judge in settling the dispute, with the UAE expressing in advance its willingness to accept the verdict of international legitimacy whatever it may be."

They added that even with Iran's continued rejection of recourse to international law, the UAE continues to announce on every occasion that it insists on the principle of peaceful settlement, a matter received with increasing understanding by numerous states and political forces.

The third prevarication, the UAE sources said, was the Iranian spokesman's claim that the UAE is making preconditions for the resumption of dialogue when in actual fact it is Iran which is making such preconditions by refusing to discuss the islands of Tunb al-Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra and confining discussions to the question of administrative arrangements for the island of Abu-Musa.

The sources further said that those who followed the first round of negotiations, which failed to achieve any results, know that the Iranian delegation adamently refused to go beyond discussion of Abu-Musa island and refused even to listen to the UAE's views on the subject.

The UAE sources added that the fact that the Iranian spokesman chose to level accusations against the UAE after the final statement of the meeting of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers seemed to be an attempt to prevent the UAE from raising the issue of the islands in regional and international circles, which is out of the question considering the Gulf and Arab response and the gains made at international level.

Yemen

Oil Company Spokesman: Briton, Canadian Freed

NC1401144594 Paris AFP in English 1431 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Sanaa, Jan 14 (AFP)—A Briton and a Canadian held for 10 days by a Yemeni tribe east of here were freed on Friday [14 January], a spokesman for the U.S. company Hunt Oil which employed them said.

The two men, along with two Yemenis, who had been held in al-Aymaniyah in the Ma'rib region some 100 kilometres (62 miles) east of Sanaa, arrived in the capital "in good health" on Friday, the spokesman said.

GPC Issues Statement on Political Crisis

JN1301203694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Jan 94

["Press statement" by the General Committee of the General People's Congress on the ongoing political crisis in Sanaa on 11 January—recorded]

[Text] The General Committee of the General People's Congress [GPC] held its periodic meeting from 9 to 11 January 1994. It is a continuation of its previous meetings which it devoted to discussing the current political crisis in the country and the very negative repercussions it imposes on other aspects of life, foremost among which is the deterioration in the economic and monetary situation and its reflections on the daily lives of citizens who are suffering from an increase in prices, deterioration of the exchange rate of the national currency, paralyzation of life in general, and frustration of people's interests and transactions. Moreover, the repercussions of this crisis did not stop when they threatened people's livelihoods. Indeed, they escalated to the point of threatening the homeland and its people and served to warn of sedition and war—a war bound to cause sweeping devastation, falling into the claws of the schemes hostile to unity, democracy, and independent development. This would result in the loss of our cultural plan to build a country of order, law, and constitutional institutions, and to establish a civilian society based on righteousness and equality and the recognition of human rights. Our great Yemeni people are fully aware that the GPC has always sought to deal with this crisis with wisdom and even-handedness, arming themselves with the spirit of national accord, and placing national interest above all other considerations. The General Committee blessed the national dialogue and reaffirmed its commitment to the results of this dialogue. Today, it values the efforts of all the forces taking part in the national dialogue, and their continuous work toward arriving at solutions to the crisis. Moreover, it was concerned about dealing with a great sense of responsibility with all opinions, ideas, and proposals presented for discussion in all political, media, security fields, as well as issues dealing with building the country. The General Committee very regrettably noticed a host of daily acts and practices that contradict agreements and resolutions reached through the National Dialogue Committee. This clearly creates more complications and obstacles to reaching a national agreement to solve the ongoing crisis, end its repercussions, and contain its social, security, and psychological effects. These practices, for example, have taken the following forms:

First, failure to return the military to pre-crisis locations. Indeed, moves and infringements contradicting the spirit of national unity and political accord and threatening social peace have taken place.

Second, divisive measures that do not serve the interests of all sectors of the Yemeni people, that entrench factionalism and parochialism, and lend a party coloring to most activities, thus rendering them totalitarian and undemocratic.

Third, acts of demobilization and mobilization, the creation of armed units and militias, and parading military forces in a manner that shocks the average citizens' sentiments; not to mention the tension and suspicion and doubt it creates within the military and security institution, the cohesion, solidarity, and unity of which is one of the guarantees of national unity, and is an aspect of security and tranquility among the people.

Fourth, violating the document of the government coalition and parliamentary coordination, which stipulates that cooperation must be demonstrated by the government members and agencies. A deliberate failure to attend meetings has been noticed. This has confused the government's performance, thus creating clear confusion in the daily administration of the state's executive body.

The GPC General Committee is aware, with a great sense of responsibility, of the difficult and complicated circumstances created by the crisis and warns against the dangers of what is taking place on the ground in terms of practices that could harm the results of the national dialogue and obstruct the implementational measures and executive programs. Indeed, they could pave the way for another crisis and serious repercussions of which only God Almighty knows the magnitude and destructive ramifications.

From this premise, the General Committee calls on all the unionist national forces to shoulder their high national responsibility to maintain the safety of our Yemeni homeland and our unionist democratic struggle against these practices which are harmful to our great unionist accomplishment and to the progress, growth, prosperity, security, and safety of our country. At the same time, it reaffirms the following:

First, the GPC's commitment to the results that are reached through national dialogue.

Second, demanding that the national dialogue expose the facts to the people and define every party's responsibility in the dialogue and its seriousness and determination to allow the country to reach the shores of safety, as well as its concern about social accord and peace. In due course, the general committee will reveal to the public a host of facts that deal with the background and developments of the crisis.

Third, any procrastination or prevarication about efforts to resolve the crisis will only create further serious repercussions that will jeopardize the survival of the homeland as well as the citizens' lives, particularly since such procrastination or prevarication would be accompanied by attempts to obstruct the functioning of constitutional institutions to show them as impotent and drive the homeland into the unknown.

Fourth, the General Committee condemns terrorist practices, kidnappings, and mysterious assassinations, as well as security violations, which are masterminded and used for political purposes. Furthermore, it demands that full investigations of these violations be conducted, and also that the circumstances surrounding them, as well as their poisoned purposes be made public.

While observing the serious deterioration in the citizens' daily lives, the GPC cannot allow itself to view the people's sufferings, their livelihood problems, as well as their daily

pains and hard living conditions as food for rhetorical one-upmanship and media vituperations, or as a means for winning over the hearts and minds of people to promote partisan or political purposes. This is because the GPC is well aware that the people's feelings and views are their own property. Only the people know the reasons for the crisis, know who stands to benefit from it, and who stands to benefit from its continuation. Moreover, they are well aware of the GPC's bright and honorable record, which is replete with national, humanitarian, and social contributions.

The General Committee views the initiative of their eminence the ulema and the favorable response to it by Lieutenant General brother 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, secretary general of the GPC and chairman of the Presidential Council, by his agreement to attend their meeting at the Mu'ad Bin-Jabal Mosque in the Janad area in the Ta'izz Governorate as an indication of the importance he attaches to Arab and Islamic traditions. This move by the brother GPC secretary general was meant to defuse the crisis, put minds at ease, promote trust among unity orientated leaders, and launch steps to achieve national accord and agreement. It is also proof that the brother president and GPC secretary general has a great sense of responsibility. It is an expression of the GPC's sincere desire to take the lead in showing selflessness in order to safeguard our Yemeni homeland's higher interests, the people's choice, as well as their free will regarding unity and democracy. This move is also proof that he is willing to aid our people's efforts to walk the path of revival and construction. This move also shows his support for the sincere national efforts to safeguard the future of the homeland and citizens alike.

The General Committee also hails the initiatives launched by the Yemeni revolution strugglers, the Armed Forces commanders, as well as their sincere and honest contributions to spare the homeland fragmentation and collapse. The General Committee is extremely satisfied with the results shown by popular gatherings in the Republic's governorates, for they have shown an eagerness to safeguard national unity, and called for resolving crises through dialogue, which is a manifestation of civilized conduct. Besides, this is the only option for achieving progress in the country through broad popular participation, and also through the introduction of further practices, measures, and regulations that would recreate the administrative relationship between the state's central authorities and local administrations. This new relationship must produce the largest possible degree of participation in decisionmaking with regard to facilitating daily life in administrative units, as well as local development.

The GPC cannot but highly value these sincere national stands. As a matter of course, it finds itself on the side of these masses, supportive of their demands, and appreciative of their good initiatives. Meanwhile, it salutes them for their great concern to safeguard national unity and the democratic march.

Concluding its periodic meeting, the General Committee appreciated all the sincere national efforts made by political and social forces to cope with the crisis, as well as the Arab and international efforts, which showed an eagerness to safeguard the soundness of the unionist and democratic march in Yemen. For, this reflects Yemen's standing, as well as its importance for regional security and stability, not to mention its role in peace and development. This also reflects the desire of these parties to see Yemen involved in the efforts to build a new world order that would produce security, stability, and prosperity for it, and for the region at large.

And say: Work righteousness: Soon will God observe your work, and His Apostle and the believers." [Koranic verse]

Issued by the GPC's General Committee, Sanaa, on 11 January 1994.

Dialogue Committee Meets To Resolve Crisis

JN1301211994 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Jan 93

[Text] The political forces' dialogue committee held a meeting at the Executive Committee's hall in the economic and commercial capital, Aden, this morning. The meeting is part of the committee's continued and intensive efforts to resolve the political crisis. The committee reached an agreement on a draft document of pledge and reconciliation among the parties to the political forces' dialogue to build the modern Yemeni state. Discussions will continue on some parties' views and reservations. The meetings were permeated by a good atmosphere reflecting a spirit of optimism and a sense of the historic responsibility toward the homeland under the difficult circumstances it is experiencing. The conferees showed eagerness to maintain and bolster our people's great achievements of unity and democracy and to tackle the current political crisis in a manner that ensures its nonrecurrence in the future. An emphasis has been placed on laying down the sound foundations for the building of a modern Yemeni state and its institutions and a stable system.

It is noteworthy that the basic issues in the draft document of pledge and reconciliation have been approved, pending a decision on some reservations and points that are still under consultation to [word indistinct] and sign the document in its final and formula.

The session was adjourned this afternoon to give the parties to the dialogue a chance for further consultations. They will meet again Saturday morning, 15 January.

An important statement was issued following the meetings of the political forces' dialogue committee. Following is the text of the statement:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. A statement to the nation's people issued by the political forces' dialogue committee on 13 January 1994:

Praise be to God Who says: And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves [Koranic verse]. Peace and blessings be upon the master of all prophets, the messenger of love and guidance, who said: No believer shall be considered a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.

Our esteemed people: Our beloved country is experiencing a sharp political crisis which has threatened all the Yemenis' dreams for a unified, democratic, and developed society. Had it not been for the grace of God, the wisdom of the sons of Yemen, and the sincere sentiments of its brothers and friends, Yemen would have gone down a road which would have distressed its lovers and pleased its haters. Governed by the logic of reason and wisdom, the Yemenis have opted for dialogue and tolerance rather than stubbornness and blind fanaticism. They have also opted for avoiding rather than obeying destructive tendencies. All political forces went to the dialogue table after agreeing on adopting dialogue as the sole way to resolve the crisis and to settle differences. All parties have agreed to renounce all forms and means of violence.

The political forces' dialogue committee has started its work by setting up committees which will work to halt the media, security, and military repercussions. This is order to provide a calm atmosphere that is committed to a logical and serious dialogue. The political forces' dialogue committee has laid down the necessary measures to halt these repercussions. Despite the continuation of some repercussions and some parties' violation of the committee's past decisions, the political forces' dialogue committee has continued its work effectively. This is out of its concern for the supreme objectives and to pay no attention to trivialities.

Through its continued meetings in Sanaa and Aden, the polticial forces' dialogue committee reached a full agreement on most issues raised for dialogue. They dealt with the essential causes of the frequent political crises and the need for radical solutions to ensure that they do not reoccur. The political forces' dialogue committee has placed on the table all views, papers, and proposals that have been raised by political forces from inside and outside the authority. The dialogue committee has received important documents on the foundations of the building of the modern Yemeni state, the state of law and order and institutions, a state that is based on justice, equality, freedom, democracy, and decentralization of the local government system. Such principles are based on the Islamic faith and law and respect for human rights.

The political forces' dialogue committee had been eager to accomplish its work within a period not to go beyond 10 January 1994. However, in view of the nature of the dialogue, and out of their concern about reaching a complete agreement, the political forces have decided that more time is needed before such an agreement is reached. It has set 18 January as a final date for the political forces' dialogue committee to finish the document of pledge and reconciliation, to set a mechanism and a timetable for its implementation, and to agree in principle on the place and date of the ceremonies of singing the document.

The political forces' dialogue committee stressed that the document is an advanced and important step. However, the implementation of its contents is the most important step that is being impatiently awaited by our people. In view of the importance of following up and monitoring the steps of implementation, the political forces dialogue committee must continue to exist as a popular committee to follow up the steps of implementation and to monitor the abidance of the parties to the coalition by the timetable of implementation. The committee should keep the masses apprised of the progress of implementation and should specify the stands of all parties on it without equivocation, concealment, or deception.

Pledging before God and the people to be sincere in its proposals and faithful in its actions, the political forces' committee asks the parties that have some reservations to put them aside in the interest of the homeland. It also asks all parties to avoid anything that would spoil the climate of the dialogue and exacerbate the situation. They should abide by all the measures that the committee has approved and vowed before the people to respect. Whoever disowns his pledge, violates his commitments, or drags Yemen down a road that neither satisfies God nor the people—be it through verbal abuses, violations, or failure to implement what has been committed to—will be held responsible before history and the people. God testifies to our sincere intentions.

President Meets Heads of Ta'izz Party Branches

JN1301193794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has met in the city of Ta'izz the brother leaders of political party branches in the Ta'izz Governorate. They discussed several political issues, the latest developments in Yemen, and the Ta'izz citizens' concerns, particularly those related to their basic needs and the development of living standards in their governorate. The discussion focused on the current political crisis and its negative repercussions on citizens' living conditions.

The leaders of the branches of the political party and organizations expressed their parties' stands toward the development of the current situation in our country. They stressed their parties' concern about safeguarding unity and adhering to it as a national constant. They also stated their concern about enriching democracy. They stressed the need to resort to responsible dialogue to tackle the current political crisis and to create the appropriate positive atmospheres to contribute to the success of the national dialogue committee and to enable it to come up with the desired results that will reinforce the march of national dialogue, unity, and democracy, and lay the foundations of the modern Yemeni state. They praised the contents of the statement issued by the expanded gathering and the Ta'izz sons' pledges to abide by all national constants, foremost of which are unity, democracy, and the resorting to constitutional legitimacy and peaceful dialogue to overcome all challenges facing the homeland, its unity, and democratic approach.

The brother president made a statement during the meeting. He expressed his happiness with meeting with the brother leaders of political parties and organization branches in the Ta'izz Governorate. He listened to their opinions about the current national developments and issues and the citizens' aspirations. He reviewed developments in the current political crisis and its regrettable repercussions. He affirmed the

importance of the national role the political parties and organizations should play at this delicate stage through which the homeland is passing. He stressed his concern about achieving rapid solutions, through peaceful dialogue—which will continue to be the ideal means to overcome challenges and to settle differences—to this regrettable crisis from which our people are suffering a great deal, and which is threatening the homeland's present and future. He confirmed the acceptance by the General People's Congress of the results which will be reached by the dialogue committee in a way that will safeguard unity, democracy, and stability in the homeland.

Ta'izz Governor Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Iryani attended the meeting.

Addresses Hajjah Gathering on Crisis

JN1301214694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih met at the Presidential Palace in Ta'izz today with the brother representatives of the Hajjah Governorates' gathering which includes political parties and organizations, shaykhs, ulema, dignitaries, youths, and trade unions.

The president addressed the audience and welcomed the representatives of the Hajjah gathering and expressed appreciation for their national sentiments and response to the events taking place in the homeland, and the current crisis. He also expressed appreciation for their concern about the great achievement, unity. He said: Your arrival in Ta'izz today confirms your faithfulness to unity and democracy. This is not strange for the struggler sons of Hajjah, who had the honor to defend the revolution and the republic, and who were among the vanguards who struggled for the sake of unity. Today, they are leading this march to meet with their brothers in the rest of the governorates in order to tell the truth and charge the leadership with the responsibility of safeguarding unity.

The brother president added: We bless all that you have reached in terms of resolutions and recommendations. We promise you that we will be as you think well of us. We will not go back on your demands which are in harmony with all the demands of the Republic's governorates; Hadramawt, Ta'izz, Ibb, al-Mahwit, and al-Hudaydah. Such gatherings are also being held in all the Republic's governorates.

The brother president said: For the sake of the higher national interests, I call for holding a conference to safeguard unity and democracy, to include the leaderships of all these gatherings in the Republic's governorates, whether those that have already been held or those which will be held. The president highly appreciated the ulema gathering which was concluded at the Mu'adh Bin-Jabal Mosque in the al-Janad area in Ta'izz today. He said: We hoped for our colleagues' response in the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], headed by 'Ali Salim al-Bid, to the call made by the ulema in Yemen to meet and to give predominance to Yemen's interests over any other parochial party and personal interests. He said: We are fully aware of the people's suffering. We will not be like the ostrich which buries its head in the sand. We will spare no effort to make all the concessions that are dictated by the homeland's greater interests in order to safeguard unity. I hope that the conference I am calling to be held for the leaderships of the expanded gatherings in the Republic's governorates will mark the beginning of a peaceful national march from Ta'izz to the economic and commercial capital, Aden, and to be called the march of peace, security, stability, and Yemeni unity. Unity is for all the masses of the people. It is for all the honest people of farmers, peasants, intellectuals, politicians, and every citizen. It is not for one person or a group of persons in the Presidential Council.

The brother president addressed the conferees, saying: You will find all of us within the political leadership speaking frankly and clearly on all national issues, be they issues that emerged before the inception of unity, during the transitional period, or during the regrettable crisis experienced by the homeland for the past five months—the worst crisis experienced by the homeland since the start of the fragmentation period. For, it never dawned upon us that national unity could experience such a fragmentation, or that such erroneous propaganda campaigns could be directed at the masses.

The conferees have issued a statement, affirming that the Yemeni individual is the most precious asset. Hence, the legitimacy of any regime is contingent upon its ability to provide the population with a decent living and with the components of such a living; upon its ability to care for them; upon its ability to provide them with security, justice, and a prosperous life; and also upon its ability to treat them as equals without any discrimination. Within this context, the conferees urge all competent state organs to perform their basic duties, particularly the following:

—Hastening the efforts to rid the homeland of the stifling political and economic crisis plaguing it, which has left adverse repercussions affecting citizens' lives.

—Hastening the referral of all defendants charged with assassinations, explosions, and all other criminal acts of violence, sabotage, plunder, riots, thefts, and kidnappings, regardless of the motives, to public trials, and exposing culprits, as well as their masterminds.

—Achieving the independence of the judiciary, and cleansing judicial authorities and the Public Prosecution of the negative aspects which could undermine their competence, such as bribery, favoritism, negligence, and procrastination. These organs must be reorganized and rehabilitated.

—Taking firm measures to remove all objectionable manifestations and corruption at government organs, as well as public and mixed sector organizations.

The statement urged the House of Representatives to carry out its monitoring prerogatives on the executive authority, be they the Presidential Council or the Council of Ministers.

The conferees commended the role of the Yemeni Armed Forces, and urged them to always remain the homeland's

protective shield and a symbol of national unity. It recommended that they be rebuilt and rehabilitated, and that they be redirected so they may occupy their proper positions outside cities and major residential neighborhoods, and so they may play their role in defending the homeland, its independence, and its territorial integrity. The conferees condemned the use of firearms, violence, intimidation, and acts of sabotage to resolve disputes; settle intellectual, political, social, or personal differences; or achieve a unilateral control of authority. The conferees warned all individuals, parties, and factions, regardless of whether or not they are members of the coalition government, against the consequences of any attempt to secure such a unilateral control of authority. The conferees also warned them against any efforts to tamper with the people's gains and resources.

Salih Praises Support of EC Member States

JN1301211294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, received at the Presidential Palace in Ta'izz today the ambassadors of the EC member states to our country. They discussed several issues concerning relations between our country and the EC member states.

The ambassadors explained their countries' positions toward developments in our country, stressing the EC member states' support for unity and democracy in Yemen, as well as their eagerness to solve the current political crisis in our country through peaceful dialogue apart from violence, military force, and actions that are harmful to unity. They pointed out that unified Yemen is an important element in the region's stability and world peace.

The brother president then expressed his thanks and his appreciation for the EC member states' positions and their support for unity and democracy in our country, stressing that our country is eager to promote relations with their countries to serve the joint interests of our people and their countries' peoples.

President Salih also stressed his desire to start a peaceful and democratic dialogue to deal with all issues and differences to promote the march of unity, democracy, and social peace in our country. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwa.

Al-'Attas Confers With EC Envoys

JN1401145894 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas received in the economic and commercial capital, Aden, this morning the ambassadors of the EC member states to our country. They reviewed our country's relations with the EC member states, efforts by the political forces dialogue committee to deal with the current crisis, the positive and important results of the committee, the appropriate solutions to all the problems that led to the crisis, ways to prevent similar crises in the future, and efforts to go ahead with building the institutions and bodies of the Yemeni state.

The EC member states' ambassadors stressed their countries eagerness to reinforce Yemeni unity and democracy, as well as the importance of solving the crisis through dialogue. They also praised the important results that the political forces dialogue committee has achieved.

The prime minister then expressed his appreciation for the EC member states' position, their support for Yemen's unity, and their eagerness to achieve security and stability. He also praised the EC's appreciation for current efforts in the dialogue among the political forces and stressed the importance of promoting cooperation between Yemen and the EC member states in order to achieve mutual goals.

Ulema Blame al-Bid for Failure To Meet Salih

JN1301195094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Statement issued by Yemeni ulema, who "concluded their meetings at the Mu'ad Bin-Jabal Mosque in the al-Janad area in the Ta'izz Governorate today" in Ta'izz on 13 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Because the ulema are aware of the religious duty God has asked them to perform toward their people and nation to help them cope with the dangers and hardships and effect a reconciliation, the Yemeni ulema examined the political crisis being experienced by the homeland during the meeting they held in Sanaa on 7-10 Rajab 1414 Hegira [21-24 December 1993] to address the political crisis and its implications and analyze its reasons, as well as the course of action that needs to be taken to resolve it. They issued a statement, inviting brother Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Presidential Council Vice Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid to a meeting at the Mu'ad Bin-Jabal Mosque in the al-Janad area on 27 Rajab 1414 Hejira [10 January 1994], because they were convinced that the meeting between the brother president and the brother vice president is the first step toward a reconciliation, which would help heal the rift and rid us of the crisis.

Because the ulema were concerned about the success of the meeting, they dispatched delegations to the brother president and the brother vice president, inviting them to the meeting, and asking them to be on time. That is why the ulema met at the al-Janad Mosque on 27 Rajab 1414 Hejira. The meeting continued until 30 Rajab 1414 Hejira [13 January], because they were eager to safeguard unity, contain the crisis, and identify the solutions that would spare the people calamities, to relieve them of the sufferings they are experiencing, and to thwart the efforts of Yemen's enemies to fragment it, undermine its unity, and push it into the abyss of the conflict that would confuse the population and the country.

Presidential Council Chairman brother Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih showed up at the agreed upon mosque on schedule. He informed the ulema of the reasons and ramifications of the crisis as he sees them. He also informed them that he is willing to accept the solutions the ulema deem fit. The ulema regret the failure of Presidential Council Vice Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid to show up on schedule. And

because the ulema were concerned about his participation in the meeting, they remained in touch with the competent agencies to remind him that the ulema were continuing to wait for his attendance. They continued to await his attendance until the time this statement was issued.

The ulema hold the brother Presidential Council vice chairman responsible for the consequences of his failure to attend, for his failure to respond to the ulema's letter, and for his failure to receive the delegation they sent from the al-Janad area. This is regrettable, particularly since the people are being crushed by the crisis, the hellish price hikes, and the decline in the exchange rate of the national currency.

The ulema continued their meetings in accordance with the itinerary of their meetings. During these meetings, they addressed the crisis and its repercussions, as well as the security violations and the stifling economic crisis it created. Hence, and inspired by the teachings of our true Islamic religion, which is the nation's creed, its sharia, and its way of life, the ulema underscore adherence to the following constants:

First, adherence to Yemeni unity as a religious duty and national necessity that must be safeguarded and defended. It must not be abandoned. [passage omitted]

Second, adherence to constitutional and legal legitimacy in all that does not violate the Holy Koran and the prophet's traditions. There should be no efforts to circumvent it or act against its institutions.

Third, the Holy Koran and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace be upon him, must be used as arbiters in all disputes and conflicts. [passage omitted]

Proposed solutions: Based on all that has been mentioned, and after a study of the manifestations, reasons, and repercussions of the crisis, the ulema view the following as solutions to the crisis:

First, the return to Sanaa by Presidential Council Vice Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid in response to the appeal of the House of Representatives so that he may perform his constitutional duties. For, this is the first step toward a resolution of the current crisis.

Second, ending the manifestations of fragmentation at all government and popular facilities, and merging the armies, currencies, and aviation corporations, as well as all economic institutions.

Third, halting the media and military escalation and returning the camps to where they were before the eruption of the crisis.

The Yemeni ulema urge all Armed Forces and Public Security personnel to observe neutrality in the dispute between the two parties to the crisis, and to place Yemeni interests above all partisan and personal interests.

Fourth, fighting all kinds of corruption and the corrupt, wherever they may be, as well as their supporters, and not allowing any solutions outside the context of legitimate institutions.

Fifth, the efforts made by the House of Representatives, the Yemeni ulema, and domestic and external mediators to contain the ongoing crisis and effect a reconciliation between the two parties to the crisis have failed. There has been a daily escalation in this crisis. Hence, the ulema urge the influential people in the country to convene a general Yemeni congress in which Yemenis of all governorates and sectors will be represented. In this congress, the people must be able to decide their future. The conferees have entrusted His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid 'Aziz al-Zandani and the religious scholar Judge Muhammad Bin-Isma'il al-Hajji with the task of forming a preparatory committee for the congress. They have also asked them to set a date and a venue for the congress.

Sixth, the Yemeni ulema meeting at the al-Janad area have asked the Higher Committee which prepared their meeting to follow up on the implementation of their decisions, and to inform them of new developments.

Seventh, the Yemeni ulema urge that the public be made aware of the dangers posed to their unity, security, and stability.

Concluding, the Yemeni ulema appeal to all Yemenis to demonstrate vigilance and awareness, and not to allow themselves to be dragged behind the rumors and lies promoted by domestic and foreign media, and to act upon the words of Almighty God: O Ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done. [passage omitted]

Issued at the Mu'ad Bin-Jabal Mosque in the al-Janad area on 30 Rajab 1414 Hejira, corresponding to 13 January 1994

Al-Bid Receives Omani State Minister, Message

JN1301191894 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, received in Aden today brother Yusuf Bin-'Alawi, minister of state for foreign affairs of the fraternal Sultanate of Oman, who conveyed a message to the vice chairman of the Presidential Council from his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of fraternal Oman. The message deals with the brotherly relations and issues of interest to both countries. During the meeting, they discussed areas of cooperation between our country and the fraternal Sultanate of Oman and ways to promote them. They also exchanged views on current developments.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, voiced his appreciation for Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id's position, as well as the eagerness of the brothers in the Sultanate of Oman to support the march of unity and democracy. He also welcomed all honest Arab efforts to help our country overcome its complications and difficulties, to contribute to the march of unity and democracy, and to maintain security and stability in our country.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, stressed the brotherly relations between our

country and the Sultanate of Oman, as well as the need to promote them in the services of the joint interests of the Yemeni and Omani peoples and to meet the two people's aspirations. Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid asked his brother Yusuf Bin-'Alawi to convey his greetings to His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, as well as his best wishes of further progress for the Omani people on the path of good, happiness, and development. The meeting was attended by brother Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, member of the Political Bureau and head of the Secretariat of the Yemeni Socialist Party Central Committee; Salih Abu-Bakr Bin-Husaynun, minister of oil and mineral resources; Muhammad Sa'id 'Abdallah, minister of housing and urban planning; and Salih Munassar al-Sili, governor of the Aden Governorate. On the Omani side, the meeting was attended by Yusuf al-Hariki, head of the Arab Department at the Foreign Ministry; and 'Awad Mahmud Bakathir, ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to our country.

UN Mission Hopes for Lifting of Embargo

JN1401074694 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Iraq has affirmed that the comprehensive embargo imposed on it has lost its legitimacy and, therefore, must be lifted. In a press release issued by the Iraqi UN mission yesterday, Iraq hoped that the next review of the embargo will reflect the progress that has taken place thanks to the cooperation between Iraq and the Special Committee and the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], rather than the political purposes of some UN Security Council member states.

The Iraqi press release noted that everyone has come to realize that some UN Security Council member states, particularly the United States and Britain, are trying to impose their political views on the UN Security Council's decision during the next review of the embargo.

The press release hopes again that the review scheduled for early next week will reflect the international community's real desire for lifting the blockade in light of the progress that has been made during recent months.

The statement says that if the blockade is lifted, this will prove that the positive steps and success that have taken place have had a positive effect on the UN Security Council's decision, especially after the Special Commission and the IAEA have considered Iraq's acceptance of Resolution 715 on 26 November 1993 a major step which has resulted in removing the remaining obstacle before Iraq's compliance with its obligations in accordance with Part C of Resolution 687.

The Iraqi mission's press release explained that the continued embargo will not serve the credibility of the United Nations, as the only result of continuing the embargo will be continued suffering by the Iraqi people. Recent statistics have shown that 400,000 Iraqi citizens, including 140,000 children under five, have died since the embargo was imposed, and which resulted in the scarcity of food and health supplies.

Army Reportedly Pulls Back From Kurdish Lines

NC1301162594 Paris AFP in English 1522 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Irbil, Iraq Jan 13 (AFP)—The Iraqi army has pulled back from Kurdish lines in northern Iraq along a stretch of 20-30 kilometres (12-24 miles), Kurdish defence officials said Thursday.

They told AFP that the withdrawal from the Makhmur region near the main Kurdish town of Irbil took place on Wednesday, with the army pulling back four kilometres (two miles).

There was no immediate explanation for the pull-back in Makhmur, where the Iraqi army shelled farms during the harvest last summer.

The region is close to the 36th parallel, north of which the Gulf war allies have imposed a no-fly zone for Iraqi aircraft. The declared aim of the zone is to protect the Kurds, who control northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad.

Kurdish military officials also said that Turkish gunners shelled the border regions of Narwah and Rikan, without causing damage or casualties. Turkish troops were concentrated on the other side of the border.

In Ankara, the ANATOLIA news agency reported Wednesday that Turkish army commando units had crossed into northern Iraq in pursuit of Kurdish rebels who attacked a police post in southeast Turkey killing two officers.

Thirteen rebels from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) were also killed during the attack Tuesday evening in Cukurca, near the Turkish border with Iran and Iraq.

It said the commando unit had crossed at least five kilometres (three miles) into Iraq on Wednesday.

Islamic Leader Sees Goal as Islamic Kurdistan

NC1301202094 London Kanal-6 Television in Turkish GMT 94

[Interview with Shaykh 'Uthman 'Abd-al-'Aziz, leader of the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan, by unidentified reporters; in Salah-al-Din; date not given]

[Text] While Turkey was exerting intensive efforts in the international political forum [NATO meeting] for the clarification of the status of northern Iraq, a new force silently emerged in the region. It is the Islamic Front, and its leader is Shaykh 'Uthman 'Abd-al-'Aziz. Our colleague Kursat Akyol met Shaykh 'Uthman in Salah-al-Din in northern Iraq.

[Begin recording] [First off-screen reporter] The Islamic Front made itself known for the first time last month. Following a 10-day-long bloody battle with Talabani's peshmergas, the organization withdrew and its leader Shaykh 'Uthman fell prisoner. One immediately notices the extraordinary security measures at the entrance of the house where he lives under the custody of the Kurdish leader Barzani. During the meeting with the shaykh, prominent members of his party were also present. What was the aim of this radical Islamic group that was born so quietly?

[Second off-screen reporter, translating the statement of Shaykh 'Uthman, who is on screen but unheard] Our aim is to establish an Islamic state in northern Iraq similar to the one in Iran; an independent Kurdish state governed in accordance with the shari'ah, and then to expand this state toward the north, that is, toward Turkey. Once we take the Kurds in Turkey into an independent Kurdistan we will establish a great Islamic state.

[First off-screen reporter] With what force does Shaykh 'Uthman intend to accomplish this? Where is his military power?

[Second off-screen reporter, translating 'Uthman] I cannot reply to this question, as it is a military secret. We have peshmergas in every corner of Kurdistan. We have 12,000 peshmergas only in the mountains.

[First off-screen reporter] Shaykh 'Uthman has interesting links in Turkey. He told us that he visited Turkey 10 months ago, and held quite beneficial talks during this second visit.

[Second off-screen reporter, translating 'Uthman] We met with the leading officials of the Welfare Party, with Necmettin Erbakan and Sevket Kazan. We also held beneficial and fraternal talks with the leaders of Nur Society. [video shows guards in front of a house, Shaykh 'Uthman, others sitting on a couch in a room, being interviewed]

French Delegation Meets With Government Ministers

Foreign Minister Receives Delegation

JN1301122194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1125 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad 13 Jan (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf received here today Serg Mathew, member of the French Senate, and General La Caze, member of the European Parliament and former French chief of staff, and their delegation. They exchanged views on a number of international issues of mutual concern and means of improving and strengthening bilateral ties. They also reviewed the international efforts and France's role in lifting the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq.

The French delegation arrived here last night on a visit to Iraq that will last several days.

Trade Minister Receives Delegation

JN1301152194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 13 Jan (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih today received a visiting French delegation, headed by Serg Mathew, member of the French Senate.

During the meeting, the minister gave a full explanation of the economic circumstances facing Iraq as a result of the continuation of the unjust blockade and its negative repercussions on the lives of the Iraqi people, including a shortage of food and medicine.

He also reviewed the system of ration cards in Iraq, as well as the government's support for people covered by this system, including Arabs, Iraqis, and foreigners.

Serg Mathew and the delegation accompanying him stressed the French people's desire to establish developed relations with the Iraqi people in all areas to serve their joint interests. [passage omitted]

'Aziz Confers With Delegation

JN1301215794 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz received a visiting French delegation, headed by Serg Mathew, member of the French Senate, and [name indistinct], mayor of the French city of [name indistinct]. Talks during the meeting dealt with relations between Iraq and France and the need to resume the friendly relations that existed between the two countries and which were built on friendship and the joint interests of both countries and peoples.

The French National Assembly delegation also includes General La Caze, former chief of staff and member of the European Parliament. The meeting was attended by the director of the Ba'th Party Foreign Relations Bureau.

Papers Urge Resumption of Voice of Youth, TV

JN1401092094

[Editorial Report] Baghdad AL-THAWRAH and AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic in their 8 January issues carry articles calling for resuming transmission of the Voice of Youth Radio and Youth Television, reportedly owned by Saddam Husayn's son, 'Udayy.

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH, on page 8, carries a 250-word unsigned article headlined "In Light of the Discontinuation of the Youth Radio and Television; the Need To Resume Transmission" emphasizing "that the Youth Television Channel and the Voice of Youth Radio have been well received by the various sectors of the people in view of their effective and developed performance and their serious presentation."

The paper adds: "For these reasons, we believe it is necessary to review the question of the discontinuation of the Voice of Youth Radio and the Youth Television because this discontinuation is an irreplaceable loss under these circumstances where our militant country experiences the most ferocious conspiracies in which the enemy forces use all means, including war propaganda, which we must face with new methods." The article further says: "We hope that these two stations will resume transmission so that they may perform the role required of them."

Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH, also on page 8, carries a 300-word article by Ahmad Hatif on the same topic. The article says "Suddenly, the Youth Radio and Television transmitters stopped working, and thousands of the fans of this youthful voice waited for a clear reply to a difficult question, and we received many phone calls asking about the secret and seeking a reply that we do not have about the interruption of a long-awaited dream." The article goes on to say "We believe that in the interest of Iraqi media, the media of the Mother of Battles, this honest voice should resume transmission as soon as possible. If some say that technical and operational mistakes accompanied this mistake, this does not mean that this experiment should be ignored. Mistakes should be corrected, initiatives encouraged, new plans should be formulated, and life reinfused in this unique experiment."

Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic at 1514 GMT on 10 January carried an announcement filed as referent item that: "The youth radio and television have resumed their transmission as of 1800 [1500 GMT] this evening." The radio does not give any reason for the interruption.

Rabin 'Not Optimistic' on Clinton-al-Asad Summit

TA1301181994 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Report by Sefi Handler from Labor Central Committee meeting in Tel Aviv—live]

[Excerpt] The prime minister has already left the Labor party Central Committee meeting. The political statement he had promised was not delivered for lack of time, but emerging from the meeting, the prime minister answered reporters' questions on the upcoming summit meeting between President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, slated to be held in Geneva on 16 January. The prime minister was not optimistic:

[Begin Rabin recording] I do not know exactly what will take place there. Unfortunately, I do not anticipate Syria showing greater flexibility on the matter of the price it is demanding for peace with Israel. It may show greater flexibility on the matter of the nature of peace, but we will only know that after the encounter. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Accords Only by Dialogue Between Leaders

TA1401082594 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 14 Jan 94 p 5

[Report by Nehama Duvek]

[Excerpt] "In the future, no agreement will be reached without a direct dialogue between the leaders of the Arab states and the prime minister of the State of Israel. This also applies to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. This is my conclusion from the peace process following the Declaration of Principles with the PLO."

These remarks were made last night by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin when he emerged from the Labor Central Committee session summoned to discuss the results of the Histadrut labor federation elections and the agenda for the party convention scheduled for the end of the month.

Asked whether he had relayed a message to al-Asad via Clinton, Rabin replied: "And if I did, would I publicize it in the media? In any event, I did not relay any message whatsoever." He said he is confident the Clinton-al-Asad summit will lead to the resumption of the negotiations with the Syrians and the other countries in Washington toward the end of this month.

Referring to the negotiations with the PLO, the prime minister said: "Senior officials sit down and reach agreements, and then one of them says that it was not so and that he is the boss. Then you say to yourself: We sat in Oslo, Paris, and Cairo, and now in Taba, and I still do not know for certain that the matter is finished. If there is a lesson to be drawn from the negotiations with the Palestinians, it is that no agreement should be reached in the future without a thorough dialogue between the leaders of the bodies involved in the negotiations." [passage omitted]

Beilin on Future of Settlements, Arab Rule

TA1401092594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin believes it was a mistake from the outset to build settlements in all the places where they were established, including the Golan Heights. At the same time, he says, the settlements cannot be scraped off the face of the earth retroactively. Interviewed on Qol Yisra'el, Beilin said most of the settlements will not remain under Israeli rule under the permanent arrangement and that, consequently, an agreement should be reached with the Palestinians and the Syrians whereby Israelis will be allowed to remain in their settlements under Arab rule.

The Golan Heights Settlements Committee is demanding that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin clarify whether Beilin's remarks reflect the government's policy and, if they do not, to fire Yossi Beilin.

Our correspondent Shulamit Schwerling reports that Hanan Erez, chairman of MAPAM [United Workers Party], has also criticized Deputy Minister Beilin. Erez believes that such pronouncements, coming on the eve of the Clinton-al-Asad summit, are unnecessary and damaging both politically and in terms of their impact on the mood of the Golan settlers.

Poll: 12 Percent Ready To Leave Golan if Paid

TA1401113294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] A public opinion poll conducted among Golan settlers by Haifa University's Statistics Department and commissioned by Qol Yisra'el shows that 12 percent of them would be prepared to leave the area now in exchange for appropriate compensation. About one-third of this group described sums ranging from $100,000 to $300,000 as appropriate compensation. The poll also reveals that about 6 percent of them have looked into possibilities of leaving, such as jobs and housing. Our correspondent Shula Schmerling reports that the telephone poll was conducted among approximately 300 Golan settlers.

Settlers Protest, Hand Letter to U.S. Embassy

TA1301172294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Report by Shim'on Vilna'i]

[Text] The tragedy which befell the Army [reference to 12 January Army helicopter crash in which four senior officers were killed] postponed by three days the licensed demonstration which Golan settlers planned to hold in front of the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. However, today they did present the embassy with a letter written on behalf of the settlers, which urged the United States to avoid pressuring Israel on the negotiations with Syria. The U.S. Embassy's First Secretary Kyle Scott warmly welcomed the visitors in the embassy lobby. He promised that the letter would be faxed to Geneva, as well as Washington. He said the United States will do all it can to help Israel and Syria reach joint solutions.

The delegation members were satisfied. Here is what Sammy Bar-Lev, the Qatzrin local council head, said:

[Begin Bar-Lev recording] He reiterated several times the U.S. stand that the United States is not pressuring the State of Israel on the Golan matter, that it views it as a matter for Israeli-Syrian negotiations, which it is ready to assist. It will definitely not intervene or pressure. This is a very strong message to all kinds of commentators and advisers and politicians, who predicted that we will be unable to stand up to U.S. pressure. [end recording]

Two Soldiers Wounded by Shots From Passing Car

TA1201185294 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 12 Jan 94

[Text] Two IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers were wounded by gunshots in the Jabalyah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip this afternoon. Our correspondent Shlomi Eldar reports that shots fired from a passing car at a patrol caused medium injuries to one soldier and slight injuries to another. The troops fired back, wounding a camp resident.

Soldier Wounded, 2 Arabs Killed in Hebron

TA1401052294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpt] An Israeli soldier was slightly wounded and two terrorists were killed in an incident in Hebron last night. Palestinian sources told our correspondents Moti Amir and Aviv Bushinsky that the incident took place in Hebron's Wadi Tuffah neighborhood. [passage omitted]

Israeli Killed by 'Terrorist' at Checkpoint

TA1401090794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] An Israeli citizen was stabbed to death by a terrorist at the Erez checkpoint. Another Israeli citizen was wounded in the attack. The terrorist who stabbed the two was apparently shot dead by soldiers.

Paper Notes Importance of al-Asad-Clinton Summit

JN1401100394 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 14 Jan 94 p 1

[Editorial: "Al-Asad-Clinton Geneva Summit"]

[Text] All eyes are nowadays focused on Geneva, where Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton will meet in a summit the day after tomorrow, Sunday [16 January]. Observers pin great hopes on this meeting, which they expect will produce positive results that would push forward the peace process. Such a meeting should be held and the United States should throw its full weight behind continuation of the peace process, especially after the Israeli rulers have displayed intentions which show they are not interested in a genuine peace, but in wasting time, avoiding the resolutions of international legitimacy, and avoiding compliance with the letters on the basis of which the Madrid conference was launched.

Given this situation, Syria has understood the facts and knows for certain that Israel is maneuvering and seeking separate deals with this or that Arab party. Israel has also continued to exercise the ugliest forms of suppression, terrorism, and murder. Israel has continued to confiscate Arab lands and build new settlements without any regard for the peace process or the talks that are being held in more than one capital and with total disregard for the resolutions of international legitimacy and human rights charters.

Thus, the Syrian position came clear and firm. In a nutshell, it is that there can be no peace without an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories; that there can be no peace but the just comprehensive peace that would restore the Palestinian Arab people's national legitimate rights; that there can be no peace without regaining the Arab lands in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine; and that any attempt by the Israeli rulers to avoid these principles and facts will be rejected.

Therefore, the peoples of the region who yearn for the just and comprehensive peace are pinning hopes on the Presidents al-Asad-Clinton meeting. This is because peace cannot be achieved without Syria and the region will not see peace or stability unless all the Arab parties are involved in the current peace process and on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace formula.

Finally, the Presidents al-Asad-Clinton meeting confirms the important position of Damascus in the region and its principal role, which cannot be ignored or avoided, neither in peace nor in war.

U.S. Commerce Secretary's Remarks Viewed

JN1301093494 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13-14 Jan 94 p 10

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown on Wednesday [12 January] described his visit to the Middle East next week as the best indication yet of Washington's commitment to regional economic development as part of the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Mr. Brown, who is due in Amman on Monday after visiting Saudi Arabia, noted that he would be accompanied by representatives of American businessmen and said one of the objectives of his trip was to identify areas where the U.S. private sector could be encouraged to interact with its counterparts in the countries of the region.

Parallel to that goal, Mr. Brown said, he would also be "very aggressively" pursuing the U.S. quest to have the Arab boycott of Israel lifted.

"I have raised (this issue) with every meeting I had" with the concerned governments, he said, noting that he was scheduled to meet with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ministers in Riyadh on Sunday.

"The U.S. is going to continue to push to eliminate all boycotts and I am going to press it with all the leaders with (whom) I meet, as I have done before, and as President Clinton has done," he said.

Answering questions from businessmen and journalists from Amman, Cairo, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in a satellite interview from Washington, Mr. Brown declined to be specific on most issues, saying that all options were under consideration during his visit.

The American official agreed that the continuing de facto blockade of the port of al-'Aqabah as part of the enforcement of the U.N. sanctions against Iraq was contrary to the new-found spirit of free international trade without any barriers.

But he did not indicate when Washington, through its influence in the U.N. Security Council, would be moving to address Jordanian grievances over the high cost the Kingdom's importers and exporters have to pay for shipping to and from al-'Aqabah as a result of the costly delays posed by the inspection.

Mr. Brown did promise, however, that he would study a report prepared by Jordanian businessmen and handed over to a U.S. fact- finding mission in September.

He appeared to suggest that the sanctions on Iraq were somehow directly linked to the overall Middle East peace process by suggesting that once a regional peace settlement is achieved the Jordanian concerns would be addressed.

"Vestiges of past tension have to be removed,' he said. "We hope to move as quickly as possible to that date..."

The commerce secretary also agreed that there had to be a better "equilibrium" in trade between the U.S. and Jordan, but did not spell out whether the administration was planning specific action wherever it could help increase American imports from Jordan.

According to Dr. Thabit al-Tahir, a former minister and a current member of the Jordan Businessmen's Association (JBA) who was one of Wednesday's questioners, Jordanian imports from the U.N. totalled $301 million in the first 10

months of 1993, while American imports of Jordanian products remained under $4 million.

Mr. Brown acknowledged that one of his objectives during the visit was to increase U.S. exports to the region. "I also understand that a commercial relationship is a two-way street...there has to be an equilibrium...and that is what we are trying to create."

Mr. Brown said Washington was "committed to the economic development" of the Middle East so that people can feel peace has brought changes" to their standards of living.

His visit to the Middle East at "this crucial" point in time in the peace process, Mr. Brown said, is intended to be a signal of this commitment.

"I think that is why this mission is so important," he added. "With the coming of peace people's expectations are high in all the countries involved in the region. People believe that their lives are going to change ..."

According to Mr. Brown, economic development and cooperation in the region meant increased job opportunities as one of the most tangible results of the peace process for the ordinary citizen.

The U.S. official said he and the businessmen accompanying him were looking forward to "creative kinds of proposals" from their interlocutors in the region.

He described the level of American investment in the Middle East as very low and attributed it to a sense of lack of stability and security and said Washington wanted to find out "whether we can increase the comfort level ... the confidence level" of businessmen in investing in the region.

"We are going to establish direct contacts between American businessmen and Jordanian, Palestinian, Israeli and Saudi businessmen," he said.

In the context of the American role in Palestinian economic development, Mr. Brown specifically referred to a group of Jewish American and Arab American businessmen under the umbrella of a new group, "Builders for Peace," and said Washington would be closely coordinating with the group in terms of encouraging American businesses to invest.

"Builders for peace" was set up under a Washington-encouraged initiative undertaken by former senator James Abourisk and former congressman Mel Devine. it groups many Arab-American as well as Jewish-American businessmen who have shown keen interest in investing in the occupied territories.

Infrastructure for the Palestinians in the occupied territories is an area where immediate opportunities exist for potential investors, he said.

"There is very little on that agenda (Palestinian economic development) that we are not talking about now," Mr. Brown told a Palestinian questioner from Jerusalem.

"The United States has to put a stake in the ground," he said.

Source Affirms Continued Efforts on Yemen

PM1401135494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p5

[Unattributed report: "Jordan Confirms Continuation of Its Efforts in Yemen and Denies Sending Troops With Bin-Shakir"]

[Text] Amman, Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—A high-ranking Jordanian source yesterday reaffirmed his country's interest in continuing its efforts to resolve the current crisis in Yemen resulting from continuing differences between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid. In Cairo, the Arab League confirmed that it intends to send an envoy to Yemen as part of its efforts to contain the deteriorating situation there.

In Amman, the source told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Jordan will not refrain from continuing its mediation efforts between the Yemeni leaders despite the failure of the Jordanian efforts to promote a reconciliation so far.

He added that consultations are under way between al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, Jordanian chief of the Royal Court, and members of the Yemeni leadership to make arrangements for a visit King Husayn of Jordan intends to make early next month to Sanaa and Aden to eliminate existing differences between the Yemeni president and his deputy and to bridge their views to ensure survival of the unity of the two parts of Yemen.

He stressed that the Jordanian leadership was saddened by the failure of the efforts to bring about a reconciliation meeting between the Yemeni president and his deputy in Ta'izz last Sunday. He confirmed that Bin-Shakir's visit to Sanaa and Aden on Monday was made in the context of the Jordanian mediation, sponsored by King Husayn, for the reconciliation of the officials of the two parts of Yemen.

During that visit, the source said, Bin-Shakir met with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and conveyed to him a message from King Husayn expressing Jordan's willingness to provide every possible assistance requested by the Yemeni leaders to ensure continuation of Yemeni unity. The meeting was attended by Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister Brigadier General Mujahid Abu-Shawarib and Foreign Minister Muhammad Basindwah. Bin-Shakir also visited Aden and met with Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid in the presence of a number of Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] leaders in south Yemen.

The source added that the meeting between Bin-Shakir and al-Bid dealt with ways of easing the tension between the Yemeni leaders and then working for a reconciliation meeting between the Yemeni president and vice president, but al-Bid has so far not given a full answer as to whether or not he would attend a reconciliation meeting with Salih in the presence of King Husayn in an area halfway between Sanaa and Aden early next month.

The same Jordanian source denied reports of the dispatch of Jordanian forces to Yemen, describing them as inaccurate. He said that the Yemeni leadership had asked the Jordanian Army General Command to help it in providing expertise

and advice regarding a plan the Yemeni leadership intends to implement with the aim of reorganizing the Yemeni Army units. He said that, on Monday's visit to Yemen, the Jordanian chief of the Royal Court was accompanied by Staff Major General 'Id Kamil al-Rawdan, Jordanian Army assistant chief of staff for operations and training. He added that during the visit Maj. Gen. al-Rawdan met with senior Yemeni Army officers and discussed with them the possibility of the Jordanian Army command contributing to the preparation and implementation of future plans for the reorganization of the Yemeni Army, and it was agreed to send a limited number of Jordanian officers to participate in the preparation of a new plan for that purpose.

In conclusion and in reply to a question, the Jordanian source said that Jordan is primarily interested in the continuation of security and stability in fraternal Yemen and in finding a solution to the current Yemeni crisis through dialogue and positive understanding between the Yemeni leaders.

In Cairo, informed sources at the Arab League Secretariat have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Arab League is holding consultations with the Arab states on the situation in Yemen, prevention of its partition, and preservation of its people's unity. They added that the Arab League secretary general has sent messages on this matter to Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid in the context of the endeavors to contain events there.

They also said that the Arab League is considering several options regarding the situation in Yemen with a view to putting an end to conflict and to the disputes between Salih and al-Bid, the two leaders in power. The Arab League had issued a statement expressing concern about the deteriorating situation in fraternal Yemen.

Paper Highlights Prince Hasan's Speech

JN1401080294 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Jan 94 pp 1, 27

[Editorial: "Peace and Balanced Development"]

[Text] In his valuable speech at the opening of the conference on the economies of peace in the Middle East, which opened in London recently, His Highness Crown Prince Hasan stressed that if the recent peace arrangements are to succeed, the disparities and distortions created by the conflict in the region must be eliminated, particularly the disparity between the Israeli economy and the economies of the other parties to the conflict.

An approach similar to the GATT-EU approach could be the best way to deal with the economic legacies of the conflict. The expected partnership requires a balanced economic growth which means that the excessive disparities in income levels between potential partners in the region must be reduced. This can be achieved, at some stage, by freedom of movement for goods, services, capital and labor. In the end, peace is not in the hands of governments, but of individuals, and unless peace can be made attractive to the man on the street, the best efforts of those seeking to achieve peace will be fruitless, leading to the conclusion that the gradual achievement of peace for peoples who have suffered for a long time from the calamities of the conflict will not be possible.

Such a thorough and clear view by His Highness Prince Hasan is principally based on the experience of Jordan, which is the nearest to the core of the conflict, and which shouldered an enormous human load. Jordan has given shelter to three waves of displaced Palestinians and endured a vast demographic strain and an approximately $7 billion in debts.

Thus, the reconstruction of the Middle East could proceed apace, especially if this region is allowed to play a more creative role within the context of the world economy. The climate of conflict, which has been going on for a long time, has forced the diversion of efforts away from development to finance the military confrontations. We hope the approaching age of peace will mark the end of, and the last chapter in that conflict.

Al-Hirawi Cited on U.S.-Syrian Summit

NC1401125194 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has said that bombings, like sectarian feuds, are Israeli acts. These attempts against Lebanon's unity, he added, will keep happening but security forces are prepared to foil them.

Dean of editors' Milhim Karam, who visited the president with a delegation from the Editors Union, reported that the president said that President Hafiz al-Asad is going to Geneva to defend not only issues concerning Syria and the Golan but also Lebanese issues. This summit has been well prepared and will therefore achieve positive results, he noted.

On municipal elections, the president hoped that elections will be held for the posts of village heads and mayors because municipalities have not had adequate representation.

The president emphasized that the Constitution is not a bible or divine and that it can be amended because it is man-made, negotiable, and subject to change. He noted that this Constitution did great injustice to the presidency because it weakened Article 58, which deals with urgent decrees; made the dissolution of the cabinet impossible; and annulled presidential authority on the cabinet.

The president reiterated his pledge to respect freedoms. He said that the media have a role in educating the public and saving them from perversion, which requires correspondents to tell the people all the facts.

On the cabinet debates, the president said: I agree with you that the cabinet sessions, resolutions, and agenda are not secret, but it is not wise to publicize every issue discussed by the cabinet.

Amal: Summit Will Be in 'Nation's Interests'

PM1401112094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Al-Musawi: Results of Geneva Summit Will Be in Our Nation's Interests, Thanks to Syria"]

[Text] Beirut, AL-HAYAH—Husayn al-Musawi, leader of the Islamic Amal Movement, said in his weekly seminar yesterday that "with its limitless support for the Israeli entity, the United States is taking serious steps on the road of the protocols of the elders of Zion."

However, he announced that "for our part, we will continue to fight the occupying invaders under the leadership of our guardian 'Ali Khamene'i."

He rejected "any settlement that leads to a peace with the enemy at the expense of our religion, holy places, and land, as we cannot relinquish our pride."

He added: "We will fight with all available means the microbe that has penetrated our body. We reject settlement, which abolishes the identity of our Palestinian kinfolk and their right of return."

He said that "the blood of our martyrs, the sacrifices of the young men of the Islamic resistance, and our kinfolk's steadfastness in Jabal 'Amil and west al-Biqa' and our unity will enable us to keep the jihad banner high and will help President Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva to confront the leader of world arrogance (U.S. President Bill) Clinton."

Concluding, he said "we have no doubt at all that the results (of the Geneva summit) will be in the interests of our glorious nation, because Syria has proved its real commitment to liberating all our usurped land as well as its complete care for the mujahidin defending our territory and scared land."

Iddih Hopes for 'Solution' From Summit

PM1301121694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Jan 94 p5

[Unattributed report: "Leader Iddih Hopes Clinton-al-Asad Meeting Would Produce a Solution for Lebanon"]

[Text] Paris, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Lebanese National Bloc leader Raymond Iddih yesterday wondered: "Will the Clinton-al-Asad meeting produce the solution"...for Lebanon? The Lebanese opposition leader living in France believes that Lebanon should be "the last Arab state to sign a peace agreement with Israel."

On the occasion of the upcoming U.S.-Syrian summit between Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva, Iddih made a statement in which he reviewed Lebanon's contemporary history and realities. He said that on 22 November 1943 Lebanon got its independence, its democratic parliamentary system, its political and economic liberal system, its freedom of the press, and its Islamic-Christian coexistence. These qualities upset and are still upsetting some parties, especially Israel since 1948. He added: Israel covets southern Lebanon up to al-Litani river because it wants to exploit the river's water.

On 15 March 1978 Israel suddenly invaded Lebanon up to al-Litani without any acceptable justification. On 19 March the UN Security Council passed Resolution 425 "calling (on Israel) to withdraw its forces from all Lebanese territory without delay." On 6 June 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon for a second time on feeble pretexts. Its army which, under the agreement with U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig, should not have advanced more than 40 km, reached Beirut and bombarded it from land, sea, and air.

The Security Council quickly passed Resolution 509 "insisting that Israel immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its military forces from Lebanon up to Lebanon's internationally recognized borders." Despite these two UN Security Council resolutions, the Israeli Army still occupies southern Lebanon and that has resulted in armed resistance.

After calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, Iddih said: We must not forget that Lebanon is the only Arab state with a Christian president. That is why Lebanon should be the last Arab state to sign a peace agreement with Israel. Until that happens, Lebanese-Israeli

relations should only be governed by the armistice agreement signed by the two countries on 23 March 1949, which is still valid.

Finally, Israel has nothing to fear regarding its security. It is the only nuclear power in the region. Its army is the strongest and best trained, and it is far superior in that it manufactures aircraft, tanks, and arms which it sells abroad.

Furthermore, it enjoys the political, financial, and military support of the United States. That is what has enabled it to annex territories that do not belong to it, particularly Jerusalem and the Golan and, perhaps some day, southern Lebanon. He wondered: In the face of this reality, what could be done for the liberation of Lebanon? Will the upcoming Clinton-al-Asad meeting find the solution?

Iranian Envoy, Attache Meet Defense Minister

PM1301164894 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p 2

[Unattributed report: " 'Alizadeh Calls on Dallul, Lahhud, and Fadlallah"]

[Text] Beirut, AL-HAYAH—Iranian Ambassador to Beirut Hamayun 'Alizadeh [as transliterated] yesterday called on Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul and Army Commander Emile Lahhud, introducing Staff Brigadier Kalantari [as transliterated] to them "as the Islamic Republic of Iran's first military attache in Lebanon." He discussed with them Lebanese developments and bilateral relations.

'Alizadeh also met with scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah. He said that discussions "focused on the need to devote more attention to Muslims in view of the serious conditions facing them throughout the world."

On the U.S. Congress delegation's visit to the region and its interest in the fate of the missing Israeli solders, when Israeli jails are full of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners, he said: "Regrettably, this is one of the contradictions of the new world order, and can be termed the double standards policy pursued by the United States and international circles. While the United States devotes special interest to the fate of the missing Zionist occupation soldiers, no one talks about the fate of the hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinians living in Zionist detention centers and the al-Khiyam detention center. It is really painful and regrettable."

Birri: Israel Demanding Water, Land Shares

NC1301174094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has warned that the hour of truth has struck louder and that intentions are becoming clear. The enemy has begun to demand its share of land and water and to weasel its way out of Resolution 425.

After meeting with a delegation from the photographers' union, he added that the forced military service campaign practiced by the occupation and its agents in the occupied border strip is an attempt to justify introducing Lahd's army within the ranks of the Lebanese Army.

Speaker Nabih Birri discussed some changes that have taken place on certain matters: the revival of sectarian grudges in sports, for example, as happened between the teams of al-Ansar and al-Hikmah; Rabin's visit to the border strip; and the introduction of Israeli reinforcements. He noted that this is not mere coincidence. He said the Lebanese have once again proven that adherence to unity is the best kind of action and one of the conditions for resistance. He stressed that there is a Lebanese problem before a problem with Israel. There might also be a Lebanese-Syrian problem and a Syrian-Jordanian problem. He adds: I believe that efforts should be made on the internal front to clarify these conspiracies. The Lebanese people are capable of taking a united stand.

He drew attention to the fact that there are many villages that have been wrenched away from Lebanon such as al-Mtullah and the seven villages. Talk about Israel's owning 400 dunums (approximately 1.4 acres) of al-Mtullah is an Israeli attempt to circumvent Resolution 425 and deceive the public.

Hizballah Vows To Respond to 'Zionist' Attacks

LD1301184194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] The Lebanese Hizballah, stressing its policy of self-restraint in the face of the Zionist regime's attacks against southern Lebanon, declared: It will respond to those attacks at an appropriate time.

Announcing that, Hizballah officials in Beirut said today: The objective of the Zionist regime by those attacks is to drag the fighters of the Hizballah movement into an endless war in order to overshadow the political issues at the coming Syrian and American summit in Geneva.

He added: Hizballah, with full awareness of the Zionist regime's ploy, has adopted a policy of self-restraint, but it will retaliate for the aggressions of the occupier Zionists at an appropriate time a place.

Hizballah Leader on Talks With Khaddam

PM1401115494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p 3

[Muhammad Shuqayr report: "Hizballah: We Will Not Fall Into Escalation Trap; We Will Reply at Right Time"]

[Text] Beirut—A prominent Hizballah leader has said that in its talks with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and senior officials, the Hizballah delegation—comprising Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah as head and Political Bureau member Hajj Husayn al-Khalil, Deputy Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, and Islamic Amal Movement leader Husayn Musawi as members—dealt with the overall developments on the Lebanese scene. And that it also made a number of criticisms of the [Lebanese] government, especially with regard to the attitude of state institutions, which have begun to act as part of the private sector.

The prominent leader told AL-HAYAH that a major part of the talks held by the Hizballah delegation in the Syrian

capital over three days was devoted to the upcoming Syrian-U.S. summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton and the situation in the south and western al-Biqa'.

He quoted senior Syrian officials as saying that the al-Asad-Clinton summit represents an important and fundamental opportunity to emphasize Syrian constants and principles, which refuse in any way to abandon a single inch of the Golan, the south, and western al-Biqa', and which support the fateful link between the Lebanese and Syrian files. Namely, on the basis of rejecting separate solutions and refusing to allow this or that party to monopolize the situation, as was the case with the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

The leader stressed that the Lebanese and Syrian tracks are now like one track, and that Damascus does not accept priority being given to one track over the other, because it believes that the solution has to be comprehensive.

On the situation in the south, the leader emphasized that there is a common reading between Damascus and Hizballah of the aims behind the continued Israeli aggression. "Tel Aviv is seeking to include the security question at the top of the Syrian-U.S. summit agenda, so that this issue will dominate the other major issues." It was agreed to seize the escalation card from Israel's hand in order to deny it the opportunity, so that the security question will not dominate the political file to be discussed between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton.

The leader stressed that Israel "has begun again to shell civilians in the south and western al-Biqa' before the the Syrian-U.S. summit. The aim is to drag us into the game of haphazard bombardment. But we will not be dragged into this trap, at least for the time being, lest we achieve for Israel what it is seeking to achieve. However, we can reply later, that is after the Geneva summit proceedings have ended."

He added that "Hizballah still has all the options that allow it to reply to the Israeli escalation. But it reserves the right to choose the timing and method it deems suitable. It can from now pursue a policy of self-restraint until the summit concludes, while choosing a method capable of exerting pressure to halt the Israeli aggression on civilians."

The leader noted that the Hizballah delegation raised a number of issues during its talks with Khaddam. They included the following:

"—Hizballah's concerns over the move by some circles close to [Lebanese] Prime Minister Rafiz al-Hariri to normalize relations with Israel. This was reflected through participation in the water conference held in Ankara recently, and also through articles published by a Lebanese newspaper and signed by figures dealing with financial and economic matters.

"—The attitude of some official institutions and departments, which have begun to act as though they are private companies. This prompts us to ask about the fate of the brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination treaty between Lebanon and Syria, which will be difficult to translate into something that can achieve cooperation in view of the absence of public establishments in Lebanon.

"—The fate of the investigation the government pledged to the Chamber of Deputies to conduct into the 'airport bridge massacre' which took place on 13 September last year, as a result of which 50 people were killed or wounded. The investigation has still not been completed, as though some people are trying to keep this file open to prevent those directly responsible from being punished for what happened. We will not keep silent about procrastination and will continue to demand that the investigation be completed until those responsible are identified.

"—Hizballah's view that the government has been negligent in many spheres, contrary to what it promised to achieve in the ministerial statement, even though we were harmonious when we decided to withdraw confidence from it." [sentence as published]

On the Syrian position on the remarks made by the Hizballah delegation, the prominent leader said that the party was given a promise that these issues will be raised at the Lebanese-Syrian summit to be held between Presidents Ilyas al-Hirawi and Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus after the conclusion of the Syrian-U.S. summit and in the presence of Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

It is understood that Damascus is still calling for calm in Lebanon and for further cooperation and dialogue among all parties, saying that regional and international conditions do not allow any shocks that are difficult to control. It understands some of the remarks and the motives for them. However, it believes they can be overcome without reducing the role played by the government. If there are criticisms, they should be raised in order to strengthen the arena and effect action.

Damascus did not raise with the Hizballah delegation the question of resuming dialogue between it and the prime minister. This was confirmed to AL-HAYAH by the prominent leader. However, a ministerial source did not rule out the possibility of resuming contacts between the two sides, but at a later stage. That is, after Syria explores the U.S. position and the extent of President Clinton's willingness to fulfill what he promised to do, namely to reactivate the peace talks and extricate them from the present deadlock.

On the mission for which the U.S. Congress delegation visited Damascus and its tour of a number of west al-Biqa' villages which were the scene of ferocious fighting during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982—the tour which coincided with the Hizballah delegation's visit to Damascus—the prominent leader pointed out that "there is no link between our visit and the presence of U.S. Congress members." He reiterated that the presence of Hizballah's delegation and U.S. Congress members in Damascus at the same time was not an attempt to arrange a meeting under Syrian auspices or to prepare the atmosphere for negotiations by correspondence.

The leader denied that the U.S. Congress delegation's mission was discussed on the periphery of Hizballah's talks with Khaddam. He said that Hizballah "is adhering to its position and is refusing to hold any meetings or exchange any correspondence with the Americans, because they lack the

characteristics that qualify them to play the role of a broker, on the grounds that they are a concerned party."

The leader cited what Hizballah had told representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and humanitarian organizations, namely that all those captured by Israel—Lebanese and Palestinians—on Lebanese territory must be released as a condition for handing over the bodies of Israeli soldiers Hizballah has. He denied that Israeli pilot Ron Arad is in Hizballah's custody.

He pointed out that Hizballah has no information about the possibility of the Red Cross or UN humanitarian organizations making a new attempt. He stressed that Hizballah's position is clear, "and our condition is the release of all prisoners and detainees."

Geneva Summit 'Exceptional Chance' for U.S.

JN1301174894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] Gentlemen, hour by hour, next Sunday's [16 January] historic summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton in Geneva draws greater Arab, regional, and international attention. Everyone is awaiting this pivotal event in the peace process. The resjlts of this summit will definitely make major headlines in the region for a long time to come. Perhaps the great attention given to the Geneva summit primarily stems from the interest in the need to achieve peace in the Middle East, a peace that is considered an international demand more than it is a domestic or regional demand. [passage omitted].

We will not be divulging a secret if we say that we agree with the U.S. Administration on many points, most prominent of which is the need to achieve a comprehensive peace, admitting that separate and partial deals do not bring a real, viable, and durable peace, that peace can only be achieved through the restoration of the territory and ending the occupation, that the Syrian and Lebanese tracks are two integrated tracks without which the peace process cannot be completed, and that stability in the region is important, vital, and essential for world security. Such security can only be achieved through the establishment of a just, comprehensive peace based on the international legitimacy and UN resolutions. Many points of disagreement notwithstanding, the points mentioned above were behind Syria's readiness to cooperate with the former Bush administration and the present Clinton administration to make the peace process successful and to remove obstacles from its path.

For over two years, Syria has been making every sincere and honest effort in this context. This has enhanced respect for Syria, increased its importance, and boosted its stands, not only in the eyes of the world, but also in the eyes of the decisionmakers in the U.S. Administration in particular, who planned the Geneva summit as recognition and acknowledgement of Syria's role and of President Hafiz al-Asad's decisive role in the peace process. This Syrian-U.S. cooperation exists and will continue as long the U.S. Administration is committed to the peace process and as long as it is interested in its success in accordance with the assurances, guarantees, and principles on the basis of which it hBs been launched. This cooperation is apt to yield good fruits in the Geneva summit if the Clinton administration shoulders its responsibility seriously and effectively to convince the Israeli rulers to comply with the terms of peace and to fully withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.

There is no problem with Syria, which has accepted the peace process and its bases and worked to make it successful. The problem lies in the stands of the Israeli rulers, who, up to this moment, reject the bases of this process. Furthermore, they are working to marginalize this process. They are tampering with its tracks and distorting it through secret contacts and vague and incomplete agreements.

Out of our interest in the peace process, we in Syria are greatly hoping that the Geneva summit will yield positive results which will open the way for the peace process and will remove the traps that the Israeli rulers have placed in its way. By all yardsticks, it is an exceptional chance for the Clinton administration to rectify the situation, improve the atmosphere in the region, make real peace in the Middle East, and prove the credibility of the United States as the sole superpower which has a historic responsibility toward the achievement of peace and security for peoples of the world. [passage omitted]

Al-Asad Receives Phone Call From King Husayn

JN1301185994 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad today received a telephone call from His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. They discussed current moves and bilateral matters between the two fraternal countries.

Al-Shar' Receives Japanese Deputy Minister

JN1401122994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' last night received Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Hiroshi Fukuda. Raslan 'Allush, deputy foreign minister; Walid Rajab, director of the Asia Department; (Kanaka), director of the Middle East Department at the Japanese Foreign Ministry; and Minoru Kubota, Japanese ambassador in Damascus, attended the meeting.

Discussions dealt with the developments of the peace process and bilateral relations. Hiroshi Fukuda stressed Japan's interest in the expected Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton. He hoped that this summit will be successful and help achieve a just, comprehensive peace in the region.

Afghanistan

Opposition Forces Form Coordination Council

LD1401120394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Reports indicate that the situation in Afghanistan is still tense, and that the warring factions have bombed each others' positions and caused damage. Moreover, forces opposing Rabbani's government have reiterated their demand for the president's resignation. They have, furthermore, formed a new political-military organization, called the Coordination Council [Shoray-e Hamahangi] of Afghanistan's Islamic Revolution [CCAIR]. Our correspondent in Kabul reports on the latest developments in Afghanistan:

Since this morning, battles between the warring factions in Kabul have intensified. Haji Farid, a spokesmen for Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], said that extensive offensives by the forces opposing Rabbani's government began at 10.00 today, Kabul time. The offensives were waged from five different fronts in the south and southeast of the Afghan capital, and the attacking forces attempted to infiltrate the defense lines set up by Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's forces.

Battles in Kabul intensified after the government opposition groups issued a statement announcing the formation of a new political-military organization called the CCAIR. The statement, which was issued yesterday, states that without the resignation of Borhanoddin Rabbani from the presidency, the battles in Kabul will continue. In response to the statement, a spokesman for Afghan President Rabbani announced yesterday that Rabbani's government is prepared to tender its resignation only after general elections are held in 6 months' time.

In an interview today, the Hezb-e Eslami spokesman said: The precondition set by the opposition forces calling for Rabbani's resignation still stands, and Afghan Prime Minister Hekmatyar has promised that he will resign after Rabbani does so.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that last night and this morning, General Dostam's war planes repeatedly bombed the positions of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's forces, situated in the heights around Kabul's television station, the presidential palace and Bagram airport in northeast Kabul. In retaliation, Rabbani's war planes bombed the positions held by Hezb-e Eslami and General Dostam in the south and southeast of the capital.

Hekmatyar Meets With Kabul Commanders

LD1301235694 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Hekmatyar, prime minister of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, received a large number of commanders of Kabul Province belonging to various parties. He met them yesterday afternoon at the temporary headquarters of the Prime Ministry.

A radio-tv correspondent reported that topics concerning the current war in Kabul and the country's military and political affairs were discussed. The prime minister heard the (?opinions) of the commanders and stated the principled stand of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] regarding the current situation.

Our correspondent reports that the following commanders took part in the meeting:

Lt Gen Abdol Karim Abed, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Amer Anwar, commander of Jamiat-e Eslami [Islamic Society of Afghanistan].
Anwar Khan Qarabagh, Ettehad-e Eslami [Islamic Union of Afghanistan] commander.
Haji Abdorrazaq, Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami [Islamic Revolution Movement] commander.
Mawlawi Sediqollah, Harakat-e Enqelabi Eslami commander.
[Name indistinct], Ettehad-e Eslami commander.
Haji Sher Alam, Ettehad-e Eslami commander.
Moalem Sayforrahman, Jamiat-e Eslami commander.
Amir Bashir Khan, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Haji Daud, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Shayda, Jamiat-e Eslami commander.
Ehsanollah, Ettehad-e Eslami commander.
Deputy to Amanollah Kochi, Tufan Zalmay, Ettehad-e Eslami commander.
Pahlawan Qader, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Ajab Gol, Jabheh-ye Nejat-e Melli [National Liberation Front] commander.
Wolaswal Mohammad Hakim, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Mola Abdorrazeq, Harakat-e Eslami [Islamic Movement] commander.
Zalmay, Ettehad-e Eslami commander.
Abdorrazaq, Jabheh-ye Nejat-e Melli commander.
Mawlana Fazl Rahman, Ettehad-e Eslami commander.
Amir Mohammad, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Representative of Mawlawi Abdol Manan, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Sayd Mskin, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Mia Mohammad Agha, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Arsala Khan, Hezb-e Eslami commander.
Nur Agha, Hezb-e Eslami commander.

Islamic Parties Establish Propaganda Commission

LD1401015494 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful: At its session of 12 February, members of the coordination charter unanimously agreed on—because the propaganda jehad as well as the armed jehad are an objective necessity—a declaration of the coordination charter of the Islamic Parties of Afghanistan: to harmonize propaganda and give it the same direction in different fields and in various aspects of war; to exchange views and information; and to enlighten the public about current events and issues of the country in order that each one of the parties, members of the coordination charter, can participate in the supply and publication of news and to campaign against the propaganda of the

enemy force. Therefore, we inform our compatriots about the establishment of a propaganda commission with the following details:

Every party will introduce two of its literary and scholarly personalities for participation in the propaganda commission. Scholarly brothers of parties can send their scientific and political articles and texts to the propaganda commission.

Islamic parties, members of the charter, [words indistinct]. Ulema, mosque prayer leaders, officials of shia ceremonial sites, and other brothers are asked to participate in the enlightening of the people of the city's wards as a religious duty.

Radio and television staff are asked to harmonize their propaganda programs with the propaganda commission and [words indistinct].

India

U.S.-Russian Nuclear Agreement Welcomed

BK1401065794 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Commentary by Sumith Chakroberty]

[Text] While the world media continue to focus on the problems of economic reforms in Russia dominating the U.S.-Russian summit talks in the Kremlin, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and his Russian counterpart, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, have taken yet another major step toward consolidating international peace. The two presidents have reached an agreement to end the targeting of their long-range nuclear missiles at each other. Skeptics had been prompt to point to the infirmities in the accord. Besides mentioning the difficulties involved in carrying it out, they have pointed out that the whole exercise could be easily reprogrammed to return to the old position of aiming at each other. However, what is being forgotten is that despite numerous problems afflicting U.S.-Russian relations today, Russia as well as the other constituents of the former Soviet Union have along with the United States firmly set themselves on a course of nuclear disarmament which is practically irreversible. Both the intermediate nuclear forces treaty evolved at the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in December 1987 in Washington and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START-II, arrived at in January last year in Moscow during the last Bush-Yeltsin summit have provided sufficient testimony of that course. In fact, such a course signifies the final burial of the cold war, conclusive evidence of which is offered by the latest accord.

Perhaps, more striking is Mr. Leonid Kravchuk, the president of Ukraine, joining Mr. Clinton and Mr. Yeltsin in Moscow to attest their signatures on an agreement envisaging the destruction of the nuclear arsenal in Ukraine's possession. This arsenal of 1,900 warheads is the world's third largest after those of the United States and Russia. This accord too has generated a lot of skepticism, fuelled as it is by the rise of nationalist sentiments in the various republics of the erstwhile USSR threatening to nullify the essence of whatever has been achieved. Nevertheless, while not being blind to such an eventuality, it is necessary to underline that these fears are exaggerated, precisely when the public opinion in Russia and other member states of the former Soviet Union is for protection of their national interests alongside economic development and national regeneration for which reinforcement of peace through nuclear disarmament constituents an essential precondition. Mr. Clinton has emphasized the U.S.-Russian role in promoting European security.

The agreements about to be concluded in Moscow are of far-reaching nature and would, therefore, actually exert a powerful positive influence on global security in general, far beyond the borders of the European continent. They are also in full conformity with the Indian action plan for disarmament spelt out by the late Rajiv Gandhi at the third special session of the UN on disarmament.

Insurance Committee Rejects U.S. 'Threat'

BK1301140894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] The former Reserve Bank of India governor, Mr. R.N. Malhotra, has said that the committee headed by him has recommended privatization of the insurance business only to protect the interests of the insuring public. In an interview to PTI, he asserted that the U.S. threat to retaliate against India if it did not open up its insurance industry did not weigh with the committee. He said that opening up the insurance sector would lead to better service by existing companies and also by the new entrants.

Bhutto China Visit, Talks With Li Peng Viewed

BK1201112594 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 30 Dec 93 p 8

[Editorial: "The Sino-Pakistan Link"]

[Text] Chinese friendship has been an important factor in Pakistan's foreign policy from two points of view in the last thirty years. First, every government in Islamabad has sought Chinese help in procuring military hardware and nuclear know-how and materials with varying degrees of success. Secondly, the Pakistanis have naturally attached the greatest importance to eliciting significant Chinese diplomatic support for its case on Kashmir. Benazir Bhutto's visit to Beijing has made hardly any difference to bilateral ties from either point of view. As far as the first objective is concerned, the Pakistan Prime Minister's talks with Premier Li Peng have not produced any dramatic result. None of the five documents on cooperation signed on this occasion relates to military items although the Pakistan Defence Minister, Aftab Shaban Mirani, along with the Foreign and Commerce Ministers, were present at the talks between the two delegations led by the PMs. It is not clear whether this is because Mirani, who was in Beijing three weeks ago also, had already transacted military business. The possibility of significant military purchases from China cannot, of course, be ruled out. If the two sides have decided to carry on covert business in this field, that is the established pattern all over the world.

In terms of the requirements of Pakistan's current diplomacy, a new helpful gesture by China, on Kashmir was actually far more important to Benazir Bhutto. She has not achieved this purpose. Li Peng merely reiterated the known Chinese stand that India and Pakistan should resolve this question "through patient dialogue" and "welcomed efforts conducive to a settlement". This advice cannot have been sweet music to the visiting lady's ears. It is hardly distinguishable from what the Simla Agreement enjoins India and Pakistan to do. As is well know, Islamabad pays only lip-service to this agreement while moving heaven and earth to sabotage it in practice. The lesson to be drawn, therefore, is that the Chinese connection is unlikely to give Pakistan more diplomatic manoeuverability than hitherto. In a notable amplification@of China's present policy on Kashmir, the Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Li Ruihuan, during his recent visit to New Delhi, had also condemned terrorism in any form.

The sooner the Pakistani policy-makers realise the futility of concentrating on enlisting the support of other countries for its claim to Kashmir instead of reaching an amicable settlement with India, the better it will be for regional peace and stability. To reject such a shift in the face of the demands of the new international situation will be to cling to a world of make-believe. The challenge before Benazir Bhutto is to lead her people not back into the dreary past, but towards a reassuring future.

Pakistani Minister's Statement Protested

BK1401022094 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] The Youth Congress-I workers today courted arrest near the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi protesting against the reported statement of the Pakistani foreign minister that a nuclear war may engulf South Asia if the India-Pakistan territorial dispute remains unresolved. A memorandum submitted to a representative of the high commission said the best way to resolve the dispute over Kashmir is through direct discussions between the governments of India and Pakistan as envisaged under the Simla Agreement. The Youth Congress-I also urged Pakistan to refrain from making provocative statements in the future if it wishes to maintain peace in South Asia. Islamabad should also stop interfering in India's internal affairs, the memorandum said.

Pakistani ISI Operations in Dhaka Protested

BK1301034294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] India has protested to Bangladesh for allowing Pakistan's intelligence agency, ISI [Inter-Service Intelligence], to operate from its land. New Delhi's concern was conveyed by the director general of BSF [Border Security Force], Mr. Prakash Singh, at the two-day India-Bangladesh coordination meeting which concluded in the capital yesterday. The Bangladesh delegation was led by the director general of Bangladesh Rifles, Mohammad Anwar Hussain. A BSF spokesman said that India also raised the issue of support being received by insurgent groups of the Northeast. The question of illegal immigration from Bangladesh was also raised at the meeting with India insisting that the 1991 agreement at the home secretary level should be implemented to sort out the problem.

As already reported, both India and Bangladesh agreed at the meeting to coordinate their efforts to check smuggling. The two sides also decided to undertake delineation of 50 kms of undemarcated border. The work on repair and maintenance of border pillars along the international border is to be taken up with the security forces of the two countries.

The BSF spokesman said that both India and Bangladesh have agreed that security forces should observe utmost restraint in the disputed Muharichar area and take demarcation of the border in the 1.6 km stretch immediately.

Two-Day Border Talks With Bangladesh End

BK1301135794 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] The two-day Bangladesh-India border talks have ended in New Delhi with both sides agreeing to take steps to check border crime and smuggling. Major General Mohammad Anwar Hussain, director general of the Bangladesh Rifles, and Prakash Singh, director general of the Border Security Force of India, represented their respective delegations at the talks. The two sides also agreed to check drug trafficking across the border. On the corridor issue, both Bangladesh and India agreed to adhere to the 1974 agreement and the 1975 border guideline. Maj. Gen. Hussain also called on Indian Home Minister S.B. Chavan and the home secretary in New Delhi yesterday.

General Says Kashmir Militants 'Demoralized'

BK1301100694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the militancy has declined after the Hazratbal [shrine] crisis. This was stated by the general officer commanding in chief of the Northern Command, Lieutenant General Surendra Singh, while addressing a press conference at Udhampur yesterday. He said the militants are feeling demoralized. Infighting among the militant groups is also a cause of their frustration. The general said the situation in the state is under control. He, however, did not rule out sporadic incidents of violence or killings by the militants to create tension. He said the so-called strongholds of militants, like Sopor and some other parts in the valley, have been cleared and the people are now heaving a sigh of relief.

Iran

Two Bombs Explode in Central Tehran; 3 Injured

LD1301202394 Tehran IRNA in English 2010 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 13, IRNA—Following the blast at Ferdowsi Square at 20:30 hours here Thursday, reports said two bombs had been placed in a corner street garbage bin.

Police is investigating into the incident. A police officer said he could not comment until the end of investigations. He

observed that the bombs were very small and were of the sound type. The windowpanes of a sandwitch shop and a nearby bookshop were shattered as a result of the blast.

The IRNA reporter saw an ambulance taking three injured persons to a nearby hospital. All the three were innocent passers-by. The emergency hospital of Tehran said one of the victims is criticially injured.

The area is one of the busiest in central Tehran but fortunately shops were closed at the time of the blast and pedestrians were few.

MKO Denies Planting Bombs

NC1401083994 Paris AFP in English 0003 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Paris, Jan 14 (AFP)—The main opposition movement to the Iranian Government denied late Thursday having planted two bombs that exploded in the center of Tehran, wounding three people.

The Mojahedin-e Khalq said in a statement published by its Paris office that "it never carries out bomb attacks that endanger the lives of innocent people," adding that it "clearly condemns this sort of act."

Three passers-by were wounded and shops were damaged near Ferdowsi Square in downtown Tehran late Thursday when two bombs apparently placed in a rubbish bin exploded on a street corner, the official news agency IRNA said in Tehran.

A woman later phoned IRNA from Paris to claim responsibility for the blast on behalf of the Mojahedin-e Khalq, Iran's main armed opposition group, the agency reported.

An IRNA reporter saw an ambulance rushing three people to hospital, where officials said one of them was critically injured.

Splinter Group Kills 5 MKO Leaders in Dayr

NC1301125994 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 29 Dec 93 p 2

[Text] At least five leaders of the terrorist monafeqin [hypocrites—the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, MKO] were killed and several wounded in bloody clashes between two groups.

The 15 December clash took place during an attack by members of a monafeqin splinter group, who call themselves the Execution Squad, at the monafeqin's central garrison in Dayr in southeast Iraq. A group of Kurds also assisted in the attack against the three-story command post.

A former member of the monafeqin group who fled to Jordan said on Saturday: The attack took place at 0530 [0100 GMT] on 15 December. The target was the operations control center of the monafeqin in Basra and the headquarters of Mehdi Abrishamchi, former husband of Maryan 'Azodanlu, third wife of monafeqin leader Mas'ud Rajavi. During the attack, seven missiles were fired at the building and five leaders of the terrorist group were killed on the spot.

A former member of the monafeqin group, who says he deserted because of the group's spying and terrorist activities, listed the dead as follows: Mas'ud Mazlumi from Tehran, vice chairman of the monafeqin's executive committee and one of the commanders of the group's terrorist squad; Sadiqeh Ebrahimi from Tehran, member of the so-called executive committee and one of the leaders of the group's terrorist squad; Ahmad Afshar from Mashhad, member of the so-called executive committee and one of the main elements of the group's terrorist squad; Adham Tayyebi from Tehran, the head of the organization's institutions and commander of the terrorist group; and Zahra Hosnipur "Hoseynpur" from Tehran, member of the executive committee and a head of the terrorist squad.

The former member said: After the victory of the Islamic revolution, these five people were directly involved in terrorist attacks on farmers living in border regions.

According to Kurdish sources in northern Iraq, the attackers were members of a splinter group that had deserted the main group long ago in a bid to flee Iraq and was in hiding. They gained the support of Kurds who oppose the presence of the monafeqin in Iraq for the attack on the monafeqin headquarters. The Kurds regard the monafeqin as Ba'thist agents and overtly threaten to take revenge.

'Imam's Soldiers' Claim UK Embassy Attack

PM1401083694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p4

[Unattributed report: "Attack on the British Embassy in Tehran"]

[Excerpt] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Official sources said yesterday that the British Embassy in central Tehran was the target of a machinegun attack "resulting in some material damage." There were no casualties in the attack that was carried out by persons unknown who somehow managed to drive a car through the heavily guarded streets of central Tehran late Tuesday night.

According to Tehran sources, Britain requested a "full investigation" with "appropriate measures." A paper reflecting the views of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani accused Mojahedin-e-Knalq, the organization in exile, of carrying out the attack, but the latter denied any connection with the attack and accused the government of fabricating the incident. In a telephone call to a Tehran paper a hitherto unheard of organization called "the Imam's Soldiers" claimed responsibility.

Britain has had no ambassador in Tehran since the mullahs seized power in 1979. [passage omitted]

Va'ezi Discusses Relations With Europe, Bosnia

LD1401113494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs, described American efforts to disrupt Europe's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran as

futile, saying: Relations between European countries and Iran are independent and based on long-term interests.

Mr. Va'ezi, who was speaking to a Central News Unit correspondent, stressed that at present, Iran and European countries enjoy good relations, adding: Dealing with international issues, the Islamic Republic of Iran acts on the basis of its own independently worked-out principles.

Speaking on the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran to resolve the Karabakh crisis, Mr. Va'ezi said: Following the recent requests made by the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia asking Iran to mediate in the Karabakh dispute, our country's Foreign Ministry director general for eastern Europe travelled to Yerevan and Baku to investigate the problem. He pointed out that the Karabakh problem has entered a new phase, saying: During his recent visit to Tehran, a Russian special envoy presented a plan for resolving the Karabakh crisis. It was decided that the plan be studied and the interests of the warring sides be taken into consideration.

Our country's deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs then referred to the broad support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and said: Initiated by the Islamic Republic of Iran, foreign affairs ministers of the contact group [goruh-e tamas] countries, represented by the Islamic Conference Organization, will hold a joint meeting in Geneva this Sunday [16 January] to study the latest developments in Bosnia- Herzegovina. The president of Bosnia-Herzegovina will take part in the meeting.

U.S. Said Trying To 'Strike' With Economic Weapon

NC1401124694 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 9 Jan 94 p 2

[Editorial: "What Type of Criticism?"]

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's speech at the Friday Mass Prayer and his detailed report on the country's economic situation have set in motion a series of debates in political circles in the country.

The debates are mostly centered on the types of criticism levelled on the government's performance in the past few years especially in connection with the implementation of the 5-year Development Plan.

It is an undeniable fact that the enemies of the Islamic Revolution, in particular the U.S., do not wish Iran to be successful in its social reconstruction programs, and to be turned into a prominent economic power.

The U.S. used the same strategy in its fight against communism, and finally succeeded in using that ideology's flagrant economic weakness to deliver the fatal blow at an appropriate moment. It should be pointed out that the collapse of communism was brought about by a complex combination of factors.

America has already used various tactics against Iran such as arranging coup d'etat and giving the green light to Iraq to invade Iran, and it has failed to undermine the foundations of the Islamic Republic. So now America is trying to strike at us with the economic weapon. In pursuit of that strategy the U.S. has been exerting various types of pressures on the European countries to make them restrict their economic cooperations with Iran.

One of the economic weapons with which America hopes to deal destructive blows on Iran is to spread false rumors about Iran's economic position and to create an atmosphere of instability and distrust regarding Iran's economic successes. It is a great economic success that in 5 years time electricity breakdowns will reach zero level, gas pipelines construction will have been completed in 200 cities and towns, vast portions of surface water sources will have been harnessed and telephone communication facilities will have spread to the remotest villages.

Alongside of all of these successes, the press and the other mass media have every right to express their constructive criticism.

There have undoubtedly been shortcomings in the planning and implementation of parts of the 5-Year Plan, and now at the conclusion of the Development Plan, it is the indisputable right of the press to undertake an analytic examination of the First Plan for the purpose of using the experiences gained from its implementation in the Second Plan.

It is our firm belief that a clear-cut distinction should be made between constructive and subversive criticisms.

U.S. Held Responsible for Exchange Rate Crisis

NC1301173694 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 28 Dec 94 p 10

[Unattributed commentary: "A Political Analysis of the Foreign Exchange Crisis"]

[Text] Even though dollar and foreign exchange rates are an economic issue and fall within the framework of monetary and financial policies, it is obvious that they are an important instrument for the implementation of arrogant policies. The recent crisis in foreign exchange is actually a political issue, because with the protraction of this crisis the United States expects the downfall of the anti-U.S. government in Iran. This crisis arose immediately following the explicit remarks by the leader concerning the United States. Foreign radios and the mouthpieces of the ..licies of the West and of Zionism have stated that by the end of 1993, the exchange rate would reach 2,500 rials to the dollar and that by the end of the Iranian year it will reach 3,000 rials. Some have also said that it should be 10,000 rials to one dollar.

Actually, the United States wants to use this method to increase inflation and drive up prices. This will make the people disenchanted with Islam and the revolution and force them to agree to establish relations with the United States, thinking that such relations will resolve all our problems. If the Iranian statesmen are not willing to do so, they will be overthrown! And a pro-U.S. regime will come to power!

It is very interesting to know that the dollar-rial exchange rate is determined in the United States. As the United States cannot establish direct contact with Iran, it operates through

the Dubayy foreign exchange market. At the outset of the crisis, foreign exchange dealers have only been purchasing foreign exchange and transferring these funds abroad—to Dubayy—because a higher rate for the dollar can be obtained there.

There is a clear answer to why this mechanism is being used. Through the banking mechanism, the United States is instigating inflation in Iran. With the rise in foreign exchange rates, the prices of imported items increase. In turn, the high prices of foreign exchange-related goods affect the prices of domestic products, and inflation becomes a vicious circle.

It may be asked how the United States benefits from all this. The United States is ready to spend billions of dollars to defeat an independent government. During 28 Mordad 1332 [19 August 1953 coup which overthrew Dr. Mosaddeq's rule] and other similar coups, the United States showed that it is willing to spend whatever is necessary to establish its new world order and diktat. These financial interventions concerning Iran, however, are made indirectly; in other words, the United States makes up the difference in the exchange rate of the Iranian rial and pays for it with its arrogant expenditures; and foreign exchange dealers and the fugitive Iranian subservient elements who are living in the United States are ready to invest billions of rials in order to be able to return to this country and once again take power.

Everything will be clarified by the end of this year [21 March 1994]. Inflation and high prices will assume crisis proportions. In view of this, there are two alternatives. If the people are unable to deal with the crisis and complain about high prices and inflation, the government will either fall or will have to accept the unwritten resolution of the United States in this economic war. But if the people resist and declare, as they did at the outset of the revolution, that they will tolerate oil and electricity shortages and pledge allegiance to the martyrs, then it is the U.S. Government that will fall, because the crisis will be transferred to the United States, which will then disintegrate.

The United States will, however, actually be harmed from two directions in the process: On the one hand, it is spending taxpayers' money in its futile attempt to overthrow the Iranian Government; and on the other, if it fails it will be unable to start a new propaganda wave because the United States is actually playing with U.S. public opinion now and is showing its people that it has been able plunge Iran's economy into crisis. If it succeeds in defeating Iran, no one in the United States will protest. But if Iran wins, then opposition inside the United States will definitely grow.

Paper Decries 'Sluggishness' Over Afghanistan

NC1401130394 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES (INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY) in English 6 Jan 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Kabul War and Iran's National Security"]

[Text] An upsurge in Afghanistan's bloody clashes has prompted the United Nations Secretary General Butrus-Butrus Ghali to urge the warring sides to speedily put a halt to the confrontations and strive to peacefully resolve the matter.

Amidst the new spate of Afghan fightings, the Geneva-based United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Tuesday announced that the recent whirlwind of clashes could beset the four neighbors of Afghanistan—especially Iran and Pakistan—with an influx of refugees.

A point worthy of consideration meantime is that the present war in Afghanistan is neither ethnic nor religious nor national: It is merely a power struggle that pitifully has not only tarnished the 13-year-long struggle of the Afghan people but has also posed a serious peril to the prestige of the global Islamic movement.

Developments in Afghanistan definitely bear close relationship with Iran's national security. Kabul's devastating and ruinous war will pose danger for Iran both in terms of its ideological objectives and national interests.

Pitifully, however, the Iranian Foreign Ministry sluggishly carried out just one not-so-successful move of establishing a several-hour-long cease-fire in Kabul.

Aptly, the Foreign Ministry could have launched an extensive diplomatic overture by contacting the involved sides, as well as Pakistan, some regional countries, and especially the Organization of the Islamic Conference (ICO) to preclude the spread and perpetuation of the Afghan genocide. This diplomatic sluggishness is in no way justifiable.

Meantime, the self-restraint so far exercised by the Afghanistan Islamic Unity Party [Hezb-e Wahdat] in avoiding involvement in the recent fightings is laudable.

Hopefully, this self-restraint will be kept up, and the said party will assume the role of mediator as the best stance that could be adopted. In principle, the former clashes that were flared by some groups with this party actually did not augur well for the future of Afghanistan, producing no positive results.

Envoy to Ankara Discusses Ties With Turkey

NC1301123994 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 28 Dec 93 p 7

[Interview with Ambassador to Turkey Mohammad Reza Baqeri by an unidentified KEYHAN correspondent in Ankara; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Baqeri] Iran and Turkey have many characteristics in common. They have a long history, and their relations have been marked by continuing and numerous changes, in which extraneous elements have constantly had a negative and, at times, a destructive effect.

Look at the history of these two countries. In the Ottoman era, despite both having a religious government and many common denominators, foreign elements took advantage of the minor differences between them by pitting one against the other. [passage omitted]

Westerners know that Turkey's population is 99 percent Muslim, and the people are devout and follow Islamic traditions. However, by propagating non-Islamic signs or anti-Islamic phenomena and fanning nationalism, they are portraying Iran as a disruptive and dangerous element opposed to Turkey. We perceive the same scenario being repeated in our relations with Turkey regarding the newly liberated Central Asian republics.

Intense propaganda is giving the impression that Iran and Turkey are at loggerheads and that in Turkey a lay government is in charge, while Iran has an Islamic government. So, foreign elements seek to play a destructive role. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] How are relations now?

[Baqeri] We have cordial cultural, economic, and political relations and recently initiated security cooperation. If we look at Turkey and its neighbors, we see that it has problems with all of them; that is, with Iraq, Syria, southern Cyprus, Greece, Bulgaria, and Armenia. I have urged Turkish newspapers to heed the anti-Iranian material that is disseminated, as it could give the impression that all the neighbors have strained relations with Turkey. We believe that relations can be cordial. Dr. Habibi's visit to Turkey was also very successful and agreements were reached on bilateral issues. Some transport problems we had with Turkey were eliminated during this visit.

When it came to the passage of trucks and passengers from Syria, Turkish officials created problems for pilgrims to holy sites, so Iran imposed restrictions on the Turkish trucks. The issue was resolved in a friendly manner and there are no restrictions on the passage of trucks or Iranian passenger buses. We asked them not to harass the passengers, as we are obliged to assist the Iranian passengers.

[Correspondent] How do you appraise the outcome of this visit?

[Baqeri] Prime Minister Ciller played a very active, positive, and cordial role in these talks. We have women prime ministers in our Eastern and Western neighboring countries; that is, in Turkey and Pakistan, but both fortunately have very friendly relations with Irand. This indicates that the Islamic Republic has no problems with female heads of government. We hope to see extremely positive developments following the visit by Dr. Habibi.

Two ministers accompanying Dr. Habibi met their Turkish counterparts and some agreements were reached. Soon, we hope to witness Demirel's visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran at the invitation of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

The outlook for our bilateral relations is extremely positive, but because Turkey and Iran have common enemies and foreign elements do not favor broadening Iranian-Turkish relations, the Turkish mass media as well as its officials should heed this point; that is, our enemies will capitalize on any difference between Iran and Turkey. We should give them no such pretext.

Paper Urges Regional Meeting on Kurd 'Conspiracy'

NC1401131694 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 5 Jan 94 p 2

[Editorial: "The Real Beneficiaries of an Independent Kurdistan"]

[Text] Dismemberment of Iraq's Kurdistan is a serious security threat to the entire Middle East.

Over the past few days, Iraq's Kurdistan has witnessed bloody clashes and conflicts sparked by heavy attacks launched by Jalal Talabani's group against the Muslim Kurdish Movement.

Through these hostilities are commonplace in Northern Iraq, the bloodshed in the past several days has been too violent and horrendous even by Iraqi standards.

Despite all these atrocities in northern Iraq, the Western mass media have been suspiciously silent.

In fact, taking advantage of the post-Persian Gulf War conditions, the West strives to promote "ethnic nationalism" aimed at paving the way for the dismemberment of the regional countries.

To reach this goal, the West is manipulating the weakest link in the area's security chain, namely the Kurds.

In the first phase, the West set forth the issue of "the Kurdish Parliament," and in the second stage it put forward the concept of "the Kurdish government." To this end, the West made utmost use of Iraq's current confused political climate.

In view of the West's hatred of Saddam Husayn, their next move will be to promote the recognition of this self-proclaimed "Kurdish government".

A plot of profound depth and breadth is thus in the offing, namely, the creation of a new Israel in the region possessing the Karkuk oil resources which can seriously jeopardize the territorial integrity of all the regional countries.

With time racing ahead, the massacre of the Muslim Kurds by Talabani's group should serve as a serious warning to all concerned parties.

Actually, this signifies that Talabani and his group have been designated to be in charge of enforcing this plot, and recent massacres prove that they are ready to go to any length and to commit any crime in order to bring this sinister plot to fruition.

Consequently, co-operation between Iran and Turkey, as the pivotal core of a coalition, is called for to thwart this Western ploy.

Alongside this collaboration, the two should also consult with Iraq and Syria.

In recent years Saddam's regime has meted out a great deal of oppression to the Iraqi Kurds. It should, however, be borne in mind that all Iraqis have been subjected to oppression. But this does not necessarily mean that the Iraqi Shiites, for example, will opt for dismemberment of Iraq.

Today, the conspiracy to dismember Iraq's Kurdistan stands out as a serious peril, therefore, providing moral, political, or material support to these groups by Turkey and Syria cannot be justified, and in this regard convening of an extraordinary meeting of the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Syria is called for at this time.

TEHRAN TIMES Reviews Cooperation in OPEC

NC1401124794 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 11 Jan 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Decisionmaking on the Leadership Level"]

[Text] The first oil deals in 1994 were concluded last Monday. The New Year began with reports on probable agreement among OPEC members on production cutbacks and an early meeting—prior to the previously determined date. The combination of these factors brought about a slight rise in the price of oil in the early days of the year.

In transactions concluded on the final days of 1993, oil prices sank to the lowest level in the past five years, and the average price for OPEC oil basket was fixed around $12.67.

The 30 percent decline in oil price in 1993 created serious difficulties for most of the petroleum exporting countries.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have always played key roles in OPEC since the creation of this highly significant world economic organization in 1960. In fact OPEC is the only international organization which sets price on a single raw material that is produced mainly by a number of Third World countries. The industrially advanced countries of the world have never really liked this system of price determination. They had been accustomed for too long to the arrogant assumption that it was their natural right to determine prices both for the raw materials they imported from the Third World countries as well as the price of the industrial commodities they exported to those countries. That is why they have always been trying to weaken OPEC and undermine its very foundations.

Even before the Islamic Revolution in February 1979, the industrial powers of the world tried to create tensions between Tehran and Riyadh, and although at that time government systems in both countries were monarchies attached to the West, for the reasons cited above the industrial powers of the world did everything and mostly succeeded in keeping bilateral ties between the two countries in a strained condition, specially during the 8 years of Iraq's war of aggression against Iran.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the casualties and the losses to which the countries in the region had been subjected, the events of the war had the ironic effect of lifting the veil of deception and exposing the bare truth. The countries in the region, particularly Iran and Saudi Arabia which perform key roles, realized the problems of the region and its security needs will have to be settled and resolved through peaceful cooperation among themselves. And once the regional countries have learned to settle the basic issue of the regional security through peaceful strategies, more expanded cooperations such as preserving their natural right to set the price of oil will automatically follow.

No doubt small groups in both Tehran and Riyadh will try to create tension and crisis between the two countries. But these groups are not in decisive positions in either of the two capitals, and in the final analysis what counts is the decisions reached at the level of the leaders of the two countries regarding the creation of cordial relationships.

Editorial Assesses Middle East Trends for 1994

NC1201182894 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 30 Dec 93 p 1

[Editorial: "The Middle East—1994"]

[Text] In 1993, the Middle East saw Lebanon at peace but in a state of flux, Iraq in a state of inertia bowing low before the United States and the West, and 'Arafat bartering away the pride of the Muslim, heroic nation of Palestine.

In 1993, conditions were not the same in all countries of the region, but there were some common denominators. In light of the Gaza-Jericho accord, the face of the Middle East will undergo a transformation in 1994 as the United States gains its objectives based on the trend toward compromise.

Most of the countries will relinquish part of their geopolitical positions, and countries that are emulating the U.S. model will gain from this situation. It is an immutable fact that a large part of the world's oil resources are concentrated in the Middle East, but there is no sign of any development patterns in the region. If, in 1993, the Middle East witnessed Clinton's hosting Rabin and 'Arafat in the White House, it was solely because during the eighties, a country by the name of Iraq had embarked on an extensive war and opened the path for the West to enter Islamic countries in the nineties. This is the beginning of the end of an era in which resistance took on a different connotation.

In the current year, the United States is contemplating the manifestation of another Gaza-Jericho accord so that it can make the region subservient and calm. The region should at the same time be a center for harboring a potential crisis that can be escalated into a war when the need arises.

If those countries that are on the U.S. blacklist do not react, they will not get a chance to defend themselves. International economic conditions have transformed the Middle East into an oil-producing area and at the same time a consumer of goods. By the end of 1993, the Middle East oil prices had reached an unimaginable all-time low, despite the onset of the cold winter season. The hue and cry for human rights is also heard and most Middle East leaders have not yet understood the meaning of unity, of ending their differences, and may perhaps never do so.

What makes the difficult days of the nineties bearable for the free nations of the region, however, is the cry of the intifadah.

In any case, the Americans will step up their pressure on the progressive and independent countries of the region in order to eliminate the last vestiges of resistance. They will certainly adopt an independent approach toward each country so that the others do not wake up to it and are not aware of the danger. The Middle East of 1994 will be replete wRth

compromising plans and levers of pressure for the United States so that a new picture may be drawn up.

Emami-Kashani Leads Tehran Prayers, Praises Araki

LD1401112194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Today's Tehran Friday prayers were led by Ayatollah Mohammad Emami-Kashani at Tehran University with the participation of the masses of worshippers. Friday prayers were also held throughout the country.

On the occasion of the 40th day of the demise of the scholar associated with the immaculate Ahl al-Beit family, Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani—sanctified be his soul—the interim Friday imam of Tehran in his first sermon praised his eminence's knowledge and piety, his services to Islam and seminaries, as well as his struggles to defend Islamic values. He said that his eminence's demise was a great loss to the world of Islam.

The Friday prayer leader referred to the point that jurisprudence, piety, knowledge of current affairs and the capability to defend religion are the basic conditions of Marja'iyat. Continuing, he said that considering the personality of Grand Ayatollah Araki, particularly his eminence's knowledge and piety, and that today, the Marja'iyat of the Shi'as is limited to the person of Grand Ayatollah Araki. [passage omitted]

The interim Friday prayer imam of Tehran referred to different conspiracies hatched by the word of blasphemy and arrogance against Muslims, and said: The sorrowful situations in Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, and other crisis-ridden areas of the world of Islam are all due to the hostility of the enemies of Islam, which appear in various forms. He went on to say that their efforts to silence the voice of Islam is futile and the light of Islam, now more than ever, attracts the hearts of the justice-seeking people of the world and will continue to do so.

Attacks 'Arrogant Powers'

LD1401130694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] The political and religious sermons of the Friday prayers of Tehran were held today by the interim Friday prayer leader of Tehran, Ayatollah Emami-Kashani. The interim Friday prayer leader of Tehran in the sermon on the occasion of the 40th day after the demise of Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani elaborated on the life of this divine scholar and commemorated him.

Ayatollah Emami-Kashani, in continuation of the prayers, while commemorating martyrs of the Islamic revolution and the imposed war, praised the disabled, the missing in action and the POWs of the Islamic Iran.

The interim Friday prayer leader of Tehran, pointing to the enmity of the arrogant powers with Islam said: The United Nations and the West commit crimes against Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the world arrogant powers and the Zionism commit crimes in Palestine and Lebanon, and their intervention in Afghanistan has made the Afghan groups fight each other. The interim Friday prayer leader of Tehran then stated that the arrogant powers must know that their crimes only disgrace them in the eyes and opinion of the world nations and they will never succeed in destroying Islam.

Pakistan

Leghari, Bhutto Urge Afghanistan Cease-Fire

BK1301154894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] President Sardar Farooq Ahamd Khan Leghari and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto have appealed together to the Afghan president, the prime minister, and the leaders of other groups to observe a cease-fire from 0600 [0100 GMT] tomorrow morning so as to help initiate the process of reconciliation and understanding. They said, soon after the observance of the cease-fire, Pakistan will send relief materials, including (?three) hospitals, to Afghanistan on humanitarian grounds.

Government To Open Relief Camps in Afghanistan

BK1301144694 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of intense fighting as General Dostam's forces launched an overnight assault against President Borhanoddin Rabbani's forces. A spokesman for President Rabbani's troops said they have repulsed the attack. General Dostam's jet planes also attacked key positions in Kabul. According to the International Red Cross estimate, at least 4,000 people have been wounded in the past 12 days and hundreds more are feared dead. The UN secretary general has stressed the need for humanitarian assistance for the displaced Afghan people. In a statement, the secretary general deplored large-scale fighting in Kabul and called for an immediate end to the fighting.

The government of Pakistan, with the collaboration of Jalalabad Shura [council], has decided to set up two camps inside Afghanistan to facilitate delivery of relief assistance to the displaced people. The commissioner for Afghan refugees, Rustam Shah Momen, told a meeting in Peshawar today that two camps with the capacity of 100,000 will be set up in Samarkhel and Asrashahi near Jalalabad. The meeting was attended by the representatives of the United Nations and aid giving NGO's [nongovernmental organizations] to discuss the arrangements for providing shelter and emergency relief to the war affectees of Afghanistan. The commissioner for Afghan refugees asked the United Nations agencies and other NGO's to transfer their establishment to new sites inside Afghanistan. He apprised them of the decision regarding the closure of the Pak-Afghan border and said that the government does not recognize the new arrivals as refugees. However, the Afghans, who have already crossed the border, are being accommodated in Nazir Bagh and Agha Khel tented villages near Peshawar.

Border Sealed; Refugees Stranded

BK1301100994 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 13 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Peshawar—The Pakistan government Wednesday sealed the border with the war-ravaged Afghanistan, rendering several thousand Afghans stranded at Torkham.

Almost 10,000 uprooted Kabulis are waiting on the Afghan side of Torkham for the gates to open, informed eyewitness when contacted by telephone. The figure appeared to be on the high side but the number of people who reached Torkham was substantial and had certainly grown to a few thousand by Wednesday evening. Pakistani border guards estimated that more than 66 vehicles which brought the refugees were also denied entry and now parked on the Afghans side of the border.

The border was sealed on a day when Kabul was bombed at least seven times by Gen Rashid Dostam's warplanes and even the relatively safe Khairkhana area in northern part of the city was rocketed, killing 10 people and injuring many more.

Habibullah Khan, political agent, KHYBER AGENCY, told THE NEWS that they had sealed the border on the instructions of the federal government, which apparently communicated the decision to the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] government Tuesday. He said the Afghans possessing Pakistan's visa were being allowed to enter Pakistan.

Beside Torkham, the second official crossing point between Pakistan and Afghanistan is Chaman in Balochistan province. The gates at the two border towns are opened at sunrise and closed by sunset. There is a large number of other passes and routes on the 1300-mile Durand Line which serves as a boundary between the two neighbouring states. The border is long and porous and cannot be policed.

A federal government official, requesting anonymity, while confirming the sealing of the border, said the stage had come to implement an administrative decision that was long overdue. He said the decision was reached after exhaustive discussions and weighing all pros and cons. We are willing to provide the required support to the displaced Afghans in their own country, he argued.

He said Pakistan with help from the UN and NGOs [non-governmental organizations] had sent tents, flour and other relief goods for the refugees in Jalalabad and would provide more help once these people were resettled in camps set up in Samarkhel and Dosaraka Hissarshahi.

Earlier in Islamabad, a Foreign Office spokesman had denied reports about the closure of border. He, however, added that Pakistan and the UN were trying to resettle the Afghans fleeing the fighting in Kabul on Afghan territory. He also said 14,410 Afghans who entered Pakistan since the outbreak of hostilities on New Year registered themselves. An unspecified number of new arrivals, he added, had also come through other crossing points on the border.

The federal government had taken a decision about sealing of the border in the past as well but it was subsequently withdrawn. It remains to be seen how serious is the government in implementing this decision. In any case, the Afghans wanting to enter Pakistan may use the other unofficial crossing points.

As the stranded Afghans prepared to spend a chilly winter night at Torkham in miserable conditions, the closure of the border also blocked the routine flow of hundreds of the people from both countries across the border.

The federal government decision took the NWFP government by surprise. Only a couple of days ago, the Foreign Office had said no Afghan refugee would be turned back at Torkham. A high-ranking provincial government officer, who wished anonymity, wondered at the logic behind the sudden decision. He recalled that 100,000 Afghans who crossed in to Pakistan after the battles of Kabul last year were all accommodated in NWFP without putting much burden on the government. He argued that most of them were settled in camps vacated by the repatriating refugees while a substantial number took up residence with relations and friends in Peshawar. The new arrivals, he pointed, too were from Kabul and would like to live in Peshawar or other urban centres in the province.

Meanwhile, reports from Kabul said Dostam's aircraft bombed Rabbani government installations in the capital and in Charikar, Jebel-us-Straj and Bagram. The Television hillock was another target for these jet-fighters, which reportedly flew from Mazar-e Sharif.

Radio Kabul, which had gone off the air on the first day of the ongoing battle for Kabul on January 1, resumed its broadcasts Wednesday on another frequency.

Official: Balochistan Border Open

BK1401110994 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 14 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Quetta, Jan 13: A senior government official said on Thursday that he has no orders from Interior Ministry about sealing of Pak-Afghan borders to block the influx of refugees, fleeing from Afghanistan due to fresh fighting erupted among rival Afghan groups in Kabul.

"Certainly there isn't any extraordinary movement for refugees across the Durand line (which divides both countries)," Nayyar Agha, Commissioner Quetta Division told THE MUSLIM.

He said the Home Department did not issue orders to seal borders or turn back refugees across the country's southern flanks with Afghanistan.

Meanwhile sources in Afghan Commissionerate when contacted said that till date, not a single refugee crossed into Chaman from Southern Qandahar Province.

Sources said civilian fleeing fighting in Kabul were mainly moving or have settled in Jalalabad city and did not turn to southern parts of Afghanistan for shelter.

Balochistan remained home to nearly a million Afghans, though the figures were widely believed to be exaggerated. Many refugees returned home when Afghan fighters took over Kabul after President Najibullah stopped down, but

their shuttling across the borders continued due to sporadic factional clashes among Afghans for gaining power and arms depots.

APP adds: The planned voluntary repatriation of about 85000 Afghan refugees to Afghanistan via Quetta may not start in April next if fighting continues in Kabul, UNHCR officials told APP here Thursday.

The repatriation had earlier postponed due to some misunderstandings between the Iranian government and the UNHCR regarding the modalities of delivering repatriation assistance to refugees.

Only recently the Iranian government agreed to allow the exodus with the repatriation assistance to refugees be given in Pakistan before their entry to Afghanistan the immediate repatriation could not be started in view of the onset of winters and freezing temperatures in Afghanistan.

If fighting in Kabul and northern Afghanistan stops the exodus may start some time in the month of April.

The Balochistan route for exodus of these refugees was chosen for being safer than those between Iran and Afghanistan.

Press Council Hails Clinton Reference to Kashmir

BK1401154294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan urged the international media to take serious note of the large-scale violation of human rights and atrocities committed by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir. He was addressing a joint meeting of the Press Advisory Council and the Consultative Committee of Azad Jammu and Kashmir in Islamabad today. The meeting adopted a resolution condemning the Indian Government's ban on the entry of representatives from the human rights organizations and the mass media into occupied Kashmir. The resolution says the ban has been imposed to cover up the brutal activities of Indian forces in the occupied area. The meeting called on the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] to convene a special meeting on Kashmir and also urged the Pakistani Government to make a formal request to the ICO in this regard.

The meeting welcomed the UN secretary general's annual report calling for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute and U.S. President Bill Clinton's reference to Kashmir at the UN General Assembly, which, the meeting hoped, will greatly help the implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir.

Committee Chairman Affirms Support for Kashmiris

BK1301112094 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] Chairman of the National Assembly Committee on Kashmir Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan has said Pakistan would continue to extend political, diplomatic, and moral support to the people of Kashmir till their liberation from the Indian yoke. Addressing Kashmiri refugees at Ambore in Muzaffarabad today, he said there was complete consensus between the government and the opposition on the Kashmir issue. He expressed concern over massive killings and human rights violations by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir and assured the refugees that the (?long night) of terror and Indian suppression would come to an end soon.

Sources: India Buying Stingers From Mojahedin

BK1401105594 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 14 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Islamabad (APP)—India has purchased three surface to air Stinger missiles from various Afghan commanders, sources said here Thursday.

Indian interest in Stinger was primarily to use the American technology for upgrading their Akash series of missiles which have not produced satisfactory results during the trials, they said. Indians have been desperately trying to enhance the capability of Akash to use it as an anti-missile-missile capable of engaging multiple targets.

In this context India had also approached Israel for transfer of technology of Arrow anti-missile-missile which is a joint venture of USA and Israel.

Informed sources have confirmed that access to Stinger technology would significantly help India in improving the performance of Akash missiles. It may also be recalled that the Clinton administration had allocated huge sums for purchasing the Stingers from the Mojahedin to obviate the possibility of these being delivered to a third country.

It may be mentioned here that the Indian intelligence agencies operating in Afghanistan and having links with Afghan counterparts Khad/WAD were making hectic efforts to establish rapport with various Mujahideen groups for this purpose since quite some time.

Science, Technology Protocol Signed With PRC

BK1301113294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 13 Jan 94

[Text] China and Pakistan have signed a protocol on bilateral cooperation in the fields of science and technology. Twenty projects will be undertaken by the two sides under the protocol during this year. China will undertake 12 projects in Pakistan, while Pakistan will undertake eight projects in China in various fields. China has also offered training to Pakistani scientists and engineers in various fields. The protocol has been signed in Beijing in the wake of an agreement between the two countries for cooperation in science and technology reached during the recent visit of Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto.

Complex Begins Rebuilding F-7 Fighters

BK1201123594 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 12 Jan 94 p 12

[By Ali Abbas Rizvi]

[Text] Kamra—The Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) has acquired the capability to overhaul the F-7, the latest

Chinese weapon system in the Pakistan Air Force's inventory. The first overhauled F-7 will roll out of the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex at Kamra by the end of January.

In an exclusive interview to The News, the PAC Director General, Air Marshal Dilawar Hussain, said that the F-6 Rebuild Factory (F-6RF) had successfully overhauled the first F-7 while mostly using its existing facilities. "We are now manufacturing some 126 parts of the F-7", the Air Marshal said. "Inshallah, we would undertake to manufacture some 4,000 parts of the aircraft by the end of 1994. This capability will increase over the years."

The F-6 Rebuild Factory, which has undertaken the overhaul of the F-7, was established in 1974. It over-hauled the first F-6 fighter in 1981 and its two-seat trainer FT-6 in 1985. The factory gradually expanded its facilities to undertake the overhauling of FT-5 trainers. The first overhauled FT-5 aircraft rolled out in 1987 and the first A-5 III in 1988.

Air Marshal Dilawar said the first F-7 was taken up for overhaul by the factory in April 1993. "We had the necessary basic infrastructure for the overhaul and had made few additions to our facilities for the F-7 overhaul," he said.

The F-7 is the Chinese version of the Russian MiG-21, the mainstay of the India Air Force. The PAF has reportedly bought some 60 F-7 Ms and 80 F-7Ps. The former is the upgraded export version of the F-7 while the latter meets the specific requirements of the PAF with 24 major and minor modifications over the standard export model. The improvements made by the PAF interalia include the ability to carry four air-to-air missiles instead of two and the installation of Martin Baker Pk-10LZ ejection seats.

The F-7s need overhauling after every 600 hours of flying. This factory was established with the idea to develop an in-country capability to rebuild aircraft since the aircraft otherwise would have to be sent to China for overhaul. This not only would have cost heavily in foreign exchange but also the average aircraft availability would have greatly reduced since the turnaround time from China was between 18-24 months as against 7-8 months in Pakistan. That also implied that either the aircraft were unavailable in emergencies or the PAF had to keep their replacements. Needless to stress, both the options were very expensive and time consuming.

Now, because of the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex, the PAF would get back the F-7 aircraft sent for the overhaul to Kamra in the shortest-possible timeframe specially during crisis. Also, the highly skilled manpower of the PAC would be available to augment the present resources of the PAF in case of national emergencies and war. The director general said that the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex had also been successful in producing 500 and 800 litre supersonic drop tanks for the F-7s. They are in addition to 1,140 litre auxiliary fuel tanks which the factory made for the F-6s. These drop tanks have considerably increased the endurance and range of the aircraft.

The F-6RF has successfully over-hauled more than 294 Chinese origin aircraft of various types for the Pakistan Air Force since its establishment. It also makes some 10,000 parts of F-6s, FT-6s, FT-5s and A-5IIIs for providing maintenance support to the aircraft.

The four PAC factories—the F-6 Rebuild Factory, the Mirage Rebuild Factory (MRF), the Aircraft Manufacturing Factory (AMF) and the Kamra Avionics and Radar Factory (KARF)—employ around 5,000 people and have, over the years, saved Rs10 billion in foreign exchange. That speaks volumes about the necessity for indigenisation of defence industries in Pakistan.

Sri Lanka

Army Chief 'Confident' of Rebels' Defeat

BK1401105394 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0854 GMT 14 Jan 94

["OANA/pool" item; all quotation marks as received]

[Text] Colombo, 14 Jan (LANKAPUVATH)—Army commander Lieutenant General Gerry De Silva said Thursday [13 January] that he is confident that Sri Lanka's security forces will defeat the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and force the terrorist organisation to lay down arms and accept a settlement on terms laid down by the government, despite the LTTE being stronger today than they ever were before.

The Army commander in an interview with LANKAPUVATH said the best form of defence was offensive action. He said there are no stops. Once launched into battle, it has to be decisive.

"The offensive action against the LTTE consists of two things. The short term and the long term. The short term action is on already, except that we have been put back by the floods that are prevailing now (on the battlefront)."

He said that with regard to long term plans, "as soon as possible we will go ahead and it will be a long term big offensive. This offensive, he said, would be launched with the idea of defeating the LTTE without there being any stops. He said: "I don't think there will be any stops. Once you launch into battle it has to be decisive.

The Army commander said 14 new battalions, 700 to 1,000 men in each, would be sent to the battlefront, soon.

He said the Sri Lankan soldier was a fighting soldier.

"We have been fighting (the LTTE) for over 10 years without a break. Unfortunately, the Sri Lanka Army has had to deploy its entire bayonet strength without respite. It has been a big strain on the Sri Lankan soldier. But despite all odds and very trying circumstances, he has come out of it on top. I pay tribute to our soldiers for having fought for so long and so well."

Lt. Gen. De Silva said that nowhere else in the world was a soldier deployed continuously for very long periods without a turnaround in troops, a period of rest and recuperation. Usually soldiers were required to serve only three to six months on the battlefront. There had been no time for proper training. This and many other problems will be solved.

He said that initially, the Army had made the mistake of stretching and holding on to real estate which in some cases was not that vital.

The Army commander said that the offensive capability of the Army was being brought up to levels as required in professional Army.

He said the Army was being rebuilt and restructured after recent setbacks which have caused worry to the people of this country as well as the government. He was happy to state that when the toured the battlefront a few days ago, he saw smiling faces.

The fighting spirit, motivation and professionalism, new thinking, planning, new concepts, restructuring , reorganising, hand picking field commanders for proper leadership required to win the war, infusion of military hardware more suited to meet requirements of the current ground conditions which will give greater mobility and fighting capability to the soldier, and the introduction of new concepts are some of the matters which are being urgently dealt with.

He said he will not place a time frame. Invariably, you get caught up with and boxed in. An enemy reacts to a time frame, he said.

With regard to battlefield casualties caused by terrorist mines, Lt. Gen. De Silva said that most of the casualties have occurred by troops dropping their guard and not carrying out the drills correctly and they get caught up in mine explosions.

He said that the LTTE were now using Johnny mine explosions to detonate a chain of larger, powerful Claymore mines.

As a counter to landmines, the purchase of vehicles with ploughs attached in front of the tank tracks, was beijing seriously considered.

These matters were being dealt with on a top priority basis.

Lt. Gen. De Silva said that the bunkerline concept can be done away with and replaced with more tactical forward defense localities which could encompass not only the bunkerliners but the areas forward of them also. There should be also early warning elements and obstacles built to prevent waves of terrorists attacking the bunkerlines and to break up their momentum. These obstacles can be used as a killing ground to inflict maximum casualties on terrorists.

In response to a question as to how strong the LTTE was operationally, the Army commander said they (the LTTE) have never been as strong as they are today, in the sense that first of all their capability to take on even large camps. Next would be the change of tactics or earlier practise of hitting camps, attacking with smaller numbers. Today we find large concentrations of force on isolated camps. They have put in everything and coordinated and well controlled and we see a mix of their land operations and sea borne operations to have a telling effect.

The LTTE have been well trained and devised certain (?drills) to meet up with capabilities in offensive as well as in defence postures.

The LTTE, he said, also have effective drills to counter tank capabilities. There has been a lot of thinking done on their part. It has brought them a lot of success.

The LTTE has shown a very high degree of training. There has been no numerical increase, but the LTTE had enhanced their strength such as in the Sea Tiger capability where women are playing a prominent role.

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